

EDWARD N. HOWARD

An Interview Conducted by
Darlene Norman
December 18, 1980

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NARRATOR DATA SHEET

03/11/81

DATE

Name of narrator: Edward N. Howard
 Address: 621 S. Center, Terre Haute Phone: 234-7639
 Birthdate: Jan. 22, 1920 Birthplace: Carlisle, IN
 Length of residence in Terre Haute: 13 years
 Education: Carlisle High School; BA English, Indiana University;
MA, Library Science, Indiana University
 Occupational history: U.S. Navy, 1937-57; Westinghouse Electric
Corp., 1958-61; Monroe County Public Library, 1964-66;
Indiana University, 1966-68; Vigo County Public Library, director,
1968-82.

Special interests, activities, etc. see attached

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Interviewer</u>
12-18-80	9:23 A.M.	Residence of Ed Howard	Darlene Norman

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BIO DATA ON EDWARD N. HOWARD

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A native of Sullivan County (IN), Edward N. Howard came to the Vigo County Public Library system in January, 1968, from the Division of Continuing Education at Indiana University.

Following a twenty-year tour with the U.S. Navy, Howard returned to Indiana in 1957, and began his studies in preparation for library administration at Indiana University, where he graduated with highest distinction and nomination to Phi Beta Kappa honorary society. He holds BA and MA degrees. He was head of extension services and assistant director of the Monroe County Public Library before joining the Indiana University faculty.

Howard brings to the library field a broad background of engineering administrative experience. Collateral duties on Navy ships and stations have included information and education officer assignments, instructor in Japanese language and culture, and acting chaplain. A prisoner of war during World War II after being captured when the USS Penguin was sunk by enemy planes on December 8, 1941, he was held in a number of Japanese POW camps until September, 1945.

In July, 1968, Howard adapted participative management practices to the Vigo County Library by establishing an Executive Committee for "administration by consensus", and in December, 1969, extended participation in problem solving and decision making to all full-time staff through the creation of a new organizational structure called the "Orbital Organization." This first-of-its-kind organization of staff members into orbital groupings combines the essentials of institutional life--command, coordination, co-existence, and communication--into a single structure, an innovation that received national attention. Then in 1969 the Vigo County Public Library received the national John Cotton Dana Public Relations Award for "its well-devised approach to broadening the base of library users through many avenues while revitalizing the public's appreciation of existing library services."

Howard served as editor of FOCUS ON INDIANA LIBRARIES, quarterly journal of the Indiana Library Association, from 1966 to 1970, and in October, 1969, was named Librarian of the Year by the Indiana Library Trustees Association. He was a visiting lecturer at the University of Kentucky for the 1971 intersession, and served as emcee at the 1971 ALA "Dollar Decisions" preconference on the planning-programing-budgeting system and at the 1979 ALA preconference Workshop for Editors of Library Newsletters. He also is an adjunct Associate Professor of Library Science at Indiana State University.

In 1971 he was named one of five persons from Indiana by the National Endowment for the Humanities to develop a public program relating the humanities to public policy issues in the state, and served as a member of the NEH-sponsored Indiana Committee for the Humanities until 1975.

Howard serves on the board of trustees of Terre Haute Regional Hospital, one of the 150 medical facilities operated by the Hospital Corporation of America. He also serves on the following boards of directors: Terre Haute Rotary Club, general secretary; Wabash Valley United Way, vice president for communications; and Wabash Valley Press Club, chairman of Membership Committee and fiscal agent for the Vigo County Oral History Project.

He is past chairman of the board, Wabash Valley United Way, and served as general campaign chairman in 1974 and two terms as president, 1975 and 1976. He also is past chairman of the Central Business District Committee, Terre Haute Area Chamber of Commerce; the Mayor's Citizen Advisory Committee, City of Terre Haute; and the Task Force on Transportation for the Elderly in Region Seven, a six-county area in the Wabash Valley.

In 1974 he received the Award of Merit from the Wabash Valley Central Labor Council, in 1975 the Distinguished Service Award from the Terre Haute Jaycees, and in 1976 the Labor Day Award from the Wabash Valley Central Labor Council. In 1980 he was named to the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels by John Y. Brown, Sr., governor of the state of Kentucky, and was presented the Communication and Leadership Award by District II of Toastmasters International.

He served on the Council of the American Library Association as the elected representative of the Indiana Chapter, the Continuing Education Advisory Committee of the Indiana State Library, and is past member of the Council Committee on Publishing. He is currently serving on the Joint Legislative Committee of the Indiana Library and Trustee Associations.

Author of more than forty published articles and reports, he is now best known for his monograph Local Power and the Community Library (ALA, 1978, 56 p.). He has conducted workshops on community power in Fairfax City VA, Tulsa OK, Madison WI, Dallas TX, and Wilkes-Barre and King of Prussia PA. He has spoken at universities, libraries and conferences throughout the country.

Additional biographic information appears in Who's Who in the Midwest and in a feature in April 1974 American Libraries.

EDWARD N. HOWARD

Tape 1

December 18, 1980

In Howard's home -- 621 S. Center St., Terre Haute, IN

INTERVIEWER: Darlene Norman

TRANSCRIBER: Kathleen M. Skelly

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DN: Today is Thursday, December 18th. I am Darlene Norman and I am interviewing Edward N. Howard, director of the Vigo County Public Library, in his home at 621 South Center Street, Terre Haute, Indiana. It is now 9:23 A.M..

Ed was a prisoner of war in Japan for approximately four years. This interview will center chiefly on his experience as a POW or, one might say, his journey through hell.

Ed, I think before we begin it might be beneficial for us to know a little bit about your background so we can get an idea what kind of man or boy went into the service and survived this.

HOWARD: Well, I was born in the next county south, Sullivan County. Lived on a small farm, a 40-acre farm. I was born January 22, 1920, and fortunately had a good intellect, kind of the genius range, I guess you'd say. I had something around 150 I.Q. (sigh) Graduated from high school. My mother was a substitute teacher. And I read. Did I, did I use the library? Once a week we'd go in town -- small library -- and I read and I read and I read and my mother encouraged me. So . . .

DN: How old were you when you graduated?

HOWARD: Sixteen. Fifteen, sixteen. Sixteen, I guess because I skipped one grade.

I had a scholarship to DePauw University but I refused it because I wanted travel, adventure, I wanted to see the world. I wanted to do things. So that's the kind of boy who at age 17 after bumming on the railroads and working as a ranch hand out in California, things like that, came back to Terre Haute and joined the Navy.

DN: Why in the world did you want to join the Navy?

HOWARD: Travel. Adventure. And the Navy wasn't all that popular. In fact, there were only 80,000

HOWARD: people in the Navy then. It was hard to get in. And so it was kind of an elitist group even though, to most people, the Navy was nothing. You know, a bunch of bums. In fact, I remember a sign on a . . . over in Norfolk, Virginia, that said, "Dogs and sailors stay off the grass."

DN: (Laughs)

HOWARD: You know, that kind of thing. But we were proud.

And so, I joined the Navy and wound up in Great Lakes. Went in as a musician, a trumpet player, and found out that people in the band and trumpet players, they didn't go anywhere. You were at Great Lakes or Washington, D.C., or somewhere like that. So I shifted to engineering, went to an engineering school on the east coast, then went out to the west coast, finally wound up on a ship at the island of Guam, Marianas Islands.

DN: Can you tell us a little bit about Guam?

HOWARD: Hmm.

DN: Now, let's get our years straight. What year did you join now? What year did you enlist?

HOWARD: O.K. I enlisted in 1937.

DN: O.K. When did you get to Guam?

HOWARD: April, 1937. I got to Guam in December, 1938, and, of course, they had transport ships as they called them. You didn't fly in those days. Big passenger liners operated by the Navy. The USS Henderson. I went to Guam on the Henderson and I remember the morning that we were to land. I was up early. I think I was the only one, you know, at the crack of dawn out there, (whispering) looking at that island. I wondered what it was like. I knew it was going to be beautiful and I was so excited. And sure enough, it was all green and the air was clear and the sky had beautiful clouds in it and I said, "Ah! There's my adventure." The island of Guam, Marianas Islands.

DN: What did you do while you were on this island?
What were your duties? Were you aboard ship all
the time or were you on land or . . .

HOWARD: Well, no. I was assigned to a ship. It was
a minesweep. The USS Penguin, AM 33. But it was
really a large seagoing tug, and we had about 30
crew members aboard it. Not very many of us. It
was a small ship.

So I was assigned to it and we had I think . . .
every other day you could go ashore. Rather, every
other night you could go ashore; you worked every
day. So I fell in love with the island and its
people. It was peaceful and it was beautiful.
Nobody was ever in jail. A lot of fiestas, siestas,
just a tropical paradise.

DN: Now, this is a closed port?

HOWARD: Mmmm . . .

DN: Just for naval . . . ships I mean, going to
the Orient?

HOWARD: Well, no. No, no. [Actually was a closed
port at the time] Because there was a ship operated
by PanAm [Pan American Airways] called the Trade
Winds, a four-masted schooner, that made the run out
there. That was when the flying boats -- what'd they
call them? Flying boats . . . amphibians? That's
when they were making the rounds out there. The
PanAm Clippers, they called them. And so they used
this four-masted schooner, the Trade Winds, to carry
out supplies. A closed port? No. No, I don't
think so. It's just that no one had any reason
(laughing) to call at Guam. It was about 1500 miles
east of the Philippines, and once a year we'd get
underway on the old Penguin and make a trip to the
Philippines. We stayed there anywhere from two weeks
to two or three months.

DN: What kind of . . . it's tropical climate, right?

HOWARD: Um hm. Yes. Eighty degrees. Ninety degrees.
Sometimes severe typhoons. Some of those typhoons
almost devastated the island. I remember, oh, 1940
or '41 we got word that a typhoon was coming so they
sent us out of the harbor because otherwise we'd

HOWARD: have been washed up on a reef. They sent us out of the harbor, and the ship almost didn't make it. It was awful -- 150-mile-an-hour winds. I recall looking out the portholes in the doors and here were the waves ten times higher than the ship. The ship was rolling and tossing and water's coming down. In those days you had ventilators for natural draft. I can remember the water coming down the ventilators, leaks that developed, and in our sleeping compartment we had a mixture of oil and water that's sloshing around and going up the bulkheads. The lifeboats -- we had two small boats -- they were smashed. The radio was out of commission, three days of that. Talk about excitement . . .

DN: Did you get seasick?

HOWARD: No, I never got seasick in my life. A lot of people did.

DN: I assume you also could swim well?

HOWARD: Yes, yes. And come hell or high water I was going to survive.

DN: Um hm.

HOWARD: (Laughs heartily)

DN: When did you get married now?

HOWARD: Aah. That's funny. I don't remember who introduced me to Marquita but, of course, I was in love with the island from the start. Somebody introduced me to her, an American, I think, who was married to a Guamanian girl. She was so cute. In fact there was an article in Collier's in 1937, I believe, written by Quentin Reynolds, who called Guam the "Paradise of the Pacific," and there was something in there about Marquita. /Actually, "Guam, Haunted Paradise" by W. B. Courtney, Collier's, April 8, 1939/ I just fell head over heels in love with her. She was a cutie! So we hit it off. Her father was in what they called the "insular force," those people on the island of Guam that were in the Navy. They got half of the regular Navy pay, but they didn't have to go anywhere. And so it wasn't a bad deal. But her father wasn't too cracked up about Marquita going with a white sailor, you know.

HOWARD: Her mother -- she was a jewel of a woman -- she was a school teacher herself. They had a lovely two-story home, two- or three-story home down on the beach, and everything that people there needed, you know. They had their own dug-out canoe and they had their own outdoor oven and they had servants and . . .

DN: Did you have to stay on base or where did you live?

HOWARD: After we got married?

DN: Right.

HOWARD: O.K. No. In fact, there were no restrictions, whether a person was married or not. If you didn't have the duty, then you'd get to stay ashore, see? We rented a house just a few miles from the Navy yard where the ship was tied up to a buoy out there. Nice house and had our own maid, housekeeper, I think furnished by the family. I don't know. Pretty good life.

DN: O.K. Can you tell us what you were doing on December 8, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was bombed? Where you were at and what you were doing?

HOWARD: (Sigh) I think it was perhaps a month or two before war broke out that the military authorities knew, you know, that things were . . . most of us didn't think it was . . . that they Japan were going to attack the United States. We had two . . . they called 'em YP boats and I don't know why, what YP means, but two YP boats and they were diesel -- small diesel engines -- fast-moving boats that carried a crew of four or five people, something like that.

Well, the Penguin and these two YP boats took turns patrolling the island at night. You know that was our war effort. Anything that was going on was reported. And so every third night the Penguin's out there going around the island of Guam. The island was about 30 miles long and about 7 miles wide and so anyway we sailed around twice and . . . I don't know. Anyway, darkened ship, out there, and still. So, this . . . let's see, Pearl Harbor was bombed on December the 7th; that was a Sunday. But out there it was the 8th; it was a Monday.

DN: Date line change.

HOWARD: Date line. Yes. The hundred and eightieth meridian. Yes, 180th or something. Anyway, we came back in that morning and our radio was out of commission, which quite often it was, and they had sent a messenger out from the governor's office who said that Pearl Harbor had been bombed, Clark Field had been attacked, Wake Island, whatever else. We had just tied up to a buoy. I was in charge of the firerooms at that time. We had two boiler rooms and the Old Man [the Captain] said, "We're getting underway."

DN: Now, were all your men on ship or had part of them already gotten off?

HOWARD: No. They were all on. Nobody had gotten off yet. He said, "We're getting underway." Something you never do, you know. It takes 30 minutes, an hour, to get underway, but he just said, "Cut loose of the buoy."

DN: Did he tell you why?

HOWARD: We knew. We knew what was happening. You talk about people moving around to get that . . . because he put us in a very difficult position. If we didn't get steam up again and get the engine rolling, we were going to wind up on a reef. The Old Man knew what he was doing, see.

So we scooted around, got the steam up, got the engine moving, and, of course, at general quarters I was in charge of the boiler rooms. I could tell we were leaving the harbor because at the mouth of the harbor there's some heavy weather . . . heavy water and I could tell where we were. About that time, I could hear our guns firing. We had some anti-aircraft guns.

DN: Many?

HOWARD: No. I think one -- 3 inch. It was a 3 inch, a dual purpose gun. And we had some 50-calibre machine guns. They were all firing. Every time they'd fire, the ship would shake, you know. It really wasn't made for that. The ship would shake, and the insulation would fall down and there we were

HOWARD: with . . . we were hitting these rough swells, and we're going full speed and so we knew something was up attacking. We didn't know what.

So we . . . I don't know, maybe half an hour or an hour after we got out of the harbor at least, things quieted and I heard the bomb. Whoom! It went off and the ship shook a bit, and there were holes in the bulkhead in the side of the ship. One of my men down there had blood running down his head, and he was going to get out of there, and I wouldn't let him.

DN: Were you frightened? What were your thoughts at that moment?

HOWARD: No, I wasn't frightened. It was funny. I wasn't frightened. It was adventure, and that's what I wanted!

DN: Still back to adventure.

HOWARD: To adventure. Yes.

And so we started slowing down, and then there was another bomb. One was off the stern; one was off the portside -- the left side of the ship. And by that time we were dead in the water.

Soooo, we waited and we waited and we waited and we thought, well, somebody's going to tell us something, you know, and I called the engine room. The means of communication then were quite different than they are now. There was a tube about 2 inches in diameter they called a "voice tube." It went up and through the bulkhead and you'd push a buzzer, and then somebody'd get on the other end of the tube. I pushed the buzzer and there's no one on the other end of the tube. We hollered and we rang the buzzer and there's no one out there in the engine room. And the engine room was our command post because the engine room took orders from the bridge, see.

So I told the crew, I said, "Well, they're all dead out there, I guess," but I said, "We're going to stay right here. This is our ship." You didn't abandon ship. You didn't leave your post! In a little bit a door opened . . . the hatch opened up there. "Everybody out down there!" I knew it was

HOWARD: a Japanese voice. I knew that was a Japanese voice. And I said, "Well, we've been boarded. We might as well go up." But it wasn't a Japanese voice. It was our executive officer, and he was making his last round.

And I go up topside then and everybody else had got the word: "Abandon ship." And I never got the word!

DN: They didn't bother to tell anybody . . .

HOWARD: No. They never told the fireroom and they're about . . . we were about two miles off Guam.

DN: What were they doing? Swimming? Did they have boats or . . . ?

HOWARD: We had life rafts. We had life rafts; we had life jackets, and I don't remember if there was a boat or not, but, of course, we had -- out of 30, 35 men -- we had one man killed and several wounded. So we were in pretty bad shape.

We were lucky -- the ones in the fireroom. There was just the one guy with the head wounds. And so we looked around and we found enough life jackets. I think we could have made it otherwise but it was a heck of a lot easier if you got life jackets.

Oh, yeah. Before that, everything's so quiet (dropping his voice to a whisper), and so I'm going to see what's going on. I go up the ladder to the door, the hatch that leads into the mess hall, and the mess hall then leads to the outside, the port side. And as I open the door into the mess hall, that was when the second bomb hit.

DN: Now, are these hitting directly or on the sides of your ship?

HOWARD: On the side.

DN: On the side. You never were hit directly?

HOWARD: No. No direct hit or we'd gone right down.

HOWARD: And all I saw just at the instant I opened the door is this sheet of flame, this awful noise. Scared the hell out of me. I shut -- you know I had no business bein' up there anyway -- I shut the door and ran back down (laughs) into the fireroom where I was supposed to be.

But we all made it and . . .

DN: Were there sharks in the water? Or did the bombing scare them off? How far did you have to swim? Two miles?

HOWARD: About two miles. Yes.

And there were sharks out there I guess. There were all kinds of fish. There were tarpons, the stingrays, the mantarays and the like.

But the thing we worried about because the Japanese planes kept coming back, and we were afraid they were going to bomb us or . . .

DN: Did they shoot at you while you were . . .

HOWARD: . . . strafe us.

DN: Strafe you while you were in the water?

HOWARD: I don't remember.

DN: Too busy swimming.

HOWARD: Yes. There's so many things I don't remember.

DN: Do you remember whether someone was with you or was it everyone on their own?

HOWARD: Well . . . we were together and people would help each other. I mean there was a lot of spirit. But after we got to land, then I don't remember how . . . we had to go five or six miles to get to the headquarters, the capitol city. I don't remember how we got there. I don't remember a thing about it, but I do remember looking back after we'd gotten to the island, and there's the ship.

DN: Now, they pulled the valves, right?

HOWARD: Yes. We had orders to scuttle, but I think she would have gone down because those two bombs -- the one off the stern and one off the port side -- well, made a lot of holes in her. But we were told to scuttle her, open the sea valves. But seein' that ship go down, you know, flag still flying . . . hmm . . .

DN: Now, were you thinking . . . what were you thinking about your family at the time because you know that they were there . . . ? You had no time to think about it?

HOWARD: I don't think I had any time to think about it. And, of course, it was all so unreal anyway. It couldn't be happening! I was a . . . I was an actor. It was a great drama, a world drama. I was an actor, and the play would end, see? You know, would have a happy ending. We would all ride off in the sunset or something. Of course, I was concerned. In fact, my wife was in the hospital then having our second child, a girl. And so, yes, I was concerned but then the main thing, you were a fighting man, you know. You didn't . . . the family was secondary.

DN: What kind of defenses were on the island?
What did you have? Anything to protect yourself?

HOWARD: Uh, uh. We were about 150 Navy and about 150 Marines, and they had . . . the United States had refused to arm the island so we had some 30-calibre machine guns, some 30-06 rifles, and 45s -- I remember I was issued a 45 /calibre/ sidearm, 45 revolver, automatic, whatever it was. That was about it. We had no defenses.

DN: Where did you . . .

HOWARD: We were defenseless.

DN: O.K. Where were you when the Japanese landed on the island?

HOWARD: O.K. This was on . . .

DN: This is Monday.

HOWARD: This was Monday, the 8th, out there, and after we got up to the headquarters where the governor

HOWARD: was, where everybody congregated, why they assigned me and a machinist's mate -- I was what you call a "water tender," a fireman, boilerman -- they assigned a machinist's mate and me to go down to the power plant on the beach at the capitol city of Agana to see if we could keep the power plant going so that they could have electricity. It was an old coal-burning plant. But the natives, they didn't want to stick around, and so by the second night, they left. They knew something was going to happen, and they left.

And the next morning then, see, that would have been . . .

DN: Wednesday.

HOWARD: Wednesday morning, I told the machinist's mate, because we heard guns and it was daylight, I said, "I'm going to run over . . ." I was in back of . . . I was going to run over into the power plant and see what was going on. It was a tall structure. The old coal-burning boilers, you know, they were high. I said, "I'm going to get up there and look out and see what's happening."

So, I ran over into the power plant, the back of it. Ran right into Japanese. And they were the strangest looking creatures! They had the helmets and they had camouflage palm fronds and everything. They were the stereotypical Japanese with the gold teeth and the eye-glasses and those funny "tabies" they called them -- split-toed rubber shoes. They had their weapons drawn and they had the bayonets on them. (laugh) Just really literally ran right into one of those damn bayonets! And the guy, "Yoop, yoop, byoop, byoop, byoop." Boy, I got my hands up! See . . . I mean, what else you going to do? I'm going to say, (laughs) "Wait a minute, I want to get my 45 out (laughs heartily) so I can shoot you"? No.

The machinist's last name was Berry. And I hollered, I said, "Berry, they've got me." So in a little bit, he came over, too. No reason for him to get shot.

HOWARD: And the soldiers then took us out in front of the power plant, and it was such a beautiful (voice drops to whisper) morning. Must have been 8 o'clock then. No prettier day! It just couldn't have been any prettier. The temperature was just perfect and a little breeze and here's the rolling surf, you know. It was just ideal.

They took us out. There was a Japanese officer out there. The Japanese officer said something to the soldiers that took us out to him, and they ripped our shirts off. We were in dungarees. They ripped our shirts off and just as they turned us around, the Jap officer took out his sword -- you know, he had one of those big long swords -- he took that sword out. The last thing I remember is the sunlight dancing off the blade of that sword. And I thought, this can't be happening; this isn't real! And I knew we were gonna be beheaded because that's the way they did it. I knew that was what was happening. And I was ready, you know, but it still was unreal.

So we turned around with our back to him and nothing happened. We must have stood there for half an hour or an hour. Then they put us on a truck and took us up to the plaza where everybody else was -- at the governor's palace. That's where the rest of the people were that they had. I'll never know why /I was not beheaded/.

DN: Did you know anything about the Japanese at this time? About their culture or . . .

HOWARD: No.

DN: You knew nothing at all evidently. They were foreign to you.

HOWARD: (In undertones) That's right. Foreign to me.

DN: O.K.

Now, by the time you got to the plaza, had the island surrendered totally then?

HOWARD: Yes. And there were so many people up there that were dead or . . . after they'd surrendered. I saw some of them. Japanese would come along and bayonet them, you know.

DN: Be sure they were dead?

HOWARD: No. No. I mean as they were standing up.

DN: Oh, as they were standing. O.K.

HOWARD: As they were standing . . . after they'd surrendered. There was a lot of viciousness.

DN: Did they . . . did they make you go through any kind of line and whip you with bayonets or something? I recall reading somewhere that they got on each side and you had to march through as they stabbed at you with a bayonett. Were you in that group?

HOWARD: No. No. I wasn't in that group.

I think that they made us sit down. Of course, we were without shirts and anything and a lot of people they'd stripped them naked. We had to stay in the sun all day long. No water, no food, and, of course, the sad thing was to see the American flag. That (voice drops to a whisper) was the thing that really hurt! (Continuing to whisper) To see that American flag taken down!

I don't recall what they did. I think they stomped on it or burned it or something. And to see that red ball -- the Japanese flag -- then raised. Then we knew. O.K., this is real. This is different. This is it!

Hmmm. Such a beautiful morning. Such a senseless thing! (Pause) Why???

DN: Did you think that there'd be any chance to be rescued? Were you optimistic yet at this point?

HOWARD: Mmmm hmm! We knew the fleet would sail from the west coast, east coast, Pearl Harbor, and we thought within a month, two or three months, they'd be out there . . . get us out of there. The Japanese, of course, were telling us the fleet was destroyed at Pearl Harbor. We laughed! We knew they were lying.

DN: Did they show you pictures?

HOWARD: Hmm?

DN: Did they eventually show you pictures?

HOWARD: Uh, uh. Not that I remember.

DN: No. O.K.

 After you were in the sun and they let you go into a building, where did they put you then? Where were you held?

HOWARD: There was a building that normally would handle maybe 50 people. I don't remember what the building was.

DN: The headquarters?

HOWARD: No.

DN: Insular guard headquarters?

HOWARD: Insular guard . . . or something like that. They put us all in there for, at least the first night, and there was no room to lie down. We were packed in there like sardines.

DN: Had you had anything to eat?

HOWARD: No. No food, no water that I recall.

 After that, then, they moved us to the Catholic church. They had a big beautiful Catholic church; they called it the Cathedral. They put us in that. Kept us then until the 10th of January.

DN: Now, there was no code of conduct at this time, right?

HOWARD: No. And, of course, code of conduct in war at that time at least, the military would hang together. They would fight to the death, but we were told to surrender. That bothered us a bit and, of course, that's the thing that hurts us today. The Japanese, their code was they didn't surrender, see? If they were in a position where they were faced with surrender, well, it was hara-kiri. Cut the stomach, hara-kiri [or seppuku, the ritual suicide].

HOWARD: And yet here we were; we were humiliated. And, of course, the Japanese made the most of it. We had surrendered.

But as far as their code of ethics or code of conduct, there was none. In fact one of the Japanese generals told us later on, he said, "It is Japan's aim to give its prisoners of war as much pain as humanity will allow." (whispering) We used to joke about that! "Well, I wonder how much pain humanity's going to allow?" (nervous laughter)

DN: O.K. When you were inside the Catholic church then, did you organize yourselves or plan escapes or anything? What was . . . ?

HOWARD: No. Because anything we did would hurt the people, the Guamanians. Many of us had Guamanian wives or friends. No, there was nothing we could do to

We had one man, a radioman, and it's questionable whether he did an honorable thing or not -- George Ray Tweed -- and George Ray Tweed hid. He left his post, as most of us understand it, and he hid in a cave. He had Guamanian people (whispering) taking care of him, looking out after him. One of the priests was killed because of him. A lot of people were beaten because of him. [Tweed hid out until rescued by a U.S. destroyer in 1944.]

DN: Was he the only one who hid? Or did . . .

HOWARD: He's the only one. The rest of them were killed.

We had six people on the Penguin, the ship I was on, that, for instance, where I was assigned to the power plant, they were assigned to some kind of beach detail, and they got caught so they were all beheaded. But, no, no, we couldn't do anything.

DN: What kind of food did you have while you were there? Is that the beginning of when they started starving you?

HOWARD: Yes. Yes. We got fed twice a day and, boy, it was good. All the food was delicious. Maybe you'd get a quarter of a potato and gravy with a little piece of meat. And that was it. Twice a day.

DN: Now how . . . did you cook your own food or did they bring it to you? Who passed it out? How did you divide it equally? Or did you?

HOWARD: Yes. That part was taken care of by the Americans and they were fair. Everything was divided down to the last piece of gravy and all. As I recall, the Americans at that time were in charge of the rations. Later on, they weren't [but] I think they were in charge then.

DN: Did you have any medical attention while you were there?

HOWARD: No. I don't . . . I didn't need any, fortunately, but some of the people did.

DN: Were the Guamanians able to bring you food or sneak anything in to help you out?

HOWARD: Oh, they had -- what'd they call it? -- conscription or registration or something of the Guamanians, you know, where they all had to line up and learn to bow to the Japanese and give their name and everything and No, they had to stay away from us.

One time, before we left -- one of the nice things that the Japanese did -- they let my wife come and visit me, and others who had wives there. And, of course, she had, what was it At the time [when Guam was taken] she was in the hospital for the baby -- I think she'd been in there some 8 or 9 days -- and so she was able to bring my boy who was a little over a year old then and the baby so I could see them. That was just one of the last things.

DN: That is surprising that they would think to do that.

HOWARD: Japanese weren't mean to kids, you know, like some races are. We were grateful for that. And then . . .

DN: Is that the last time you saw your wife then?

HOWARD: Um hm. Yes. [to talk to her]

DN: O.K. Where did you go from there?

HOWARD: On the 10th of January (sighs) they marched us down to the harbor, Apra Harbor. It was about a 4- or 5-mile hike. It was done partly to show the Guamanian people, well, here, the Americans they're done! So, you're going to be Japanese now. Instead of hauling us down there . . . I remember seeing my wife pass us in a truck. Some way or other -- there was a family with a truck -- she got a truck to take her down there. As we got down to the Apra Harbor, just before we went into the Navy yard -- where they were to load us on a ship -- there she is. She was standing there waiting. (nervous laughs) Hmm.

DN: Now, all the dependents -- American dependents -- were gone by this time, right?

HOWARD: All except one.

DN: Now, when you marched down to the ship, did you have just the clothing that you had on your back to begin with or what did you . . . what were you allowed to take with you?

HOWARD: That's all.

DN: That was it?

HOWARD: That was it. Yes.

But my wife was able to send somebody to give me some things. I think it was better clothing or change of clothing and a Bible. She was able to get that to me. So I carried that with me all that time. Hmm.

DN: They . . . were you told to bow also at this time? Was this when you first had to bow to the Japanese?

HOWARD: Oh, they taught us that immediately.

DN: Immediately.

HOWARD: Immediately. And it wasn't that they were doing it to humiliate us, but that was what everyone in Japan did. You bowed to your superiors . . .

DN: A form of greeting?

HOWARD: Oh, yes. Yes. Japan had very sharp class distinctions. They had very rigid codes of courtesy. You had certain forms of address. For somebody who worked for you, you know, beneath you, there was one form of salutation, someone who was your equal had another form of salutation, and someone who was superior to you had another form of salutation. But the Japanese people all bowed. And we learned as the war went along that, other than the sadistic punishment that they gave us, the ordinary punishment was the same as in their own military. And that was slapping and things like that. They had a very rigid, very rough code of punishment for their military.

So, on the 10th of January we . . .

DN: Now, this is 1942, right?

HOWARD: Yes. Yes. We were kept there a month in the Catholic church. Then we went aboard the most beautiful, diesel-driven liner you ever saw, the Argentina Maru, a passenger ship. Argentina Maru, she was on the South American route. Except we didn't get into the staterooms. There was something they called steerage.

DN: (Laughs) All the way to the bottom go.

HOWARD: Aaalll the way to the bottom. All the way to the back. The worst possible quarters you could have. And . . .

DN: What were the quarters like?

HOWARD: (sighs) Dark, dingy, smelly, crowded, no ventilation.

DN: Was there room to sleep?

HOWARD: Barely. And whether we made it or not I think was irrelevant to them. There has been much written about the hell ships that took the people from Bataan and Corregidor to Japan, but we had our taste of that. Sometimes they'd let us up for air.

END OF SIDE 1

TAPE 1-SIDE 2

HOWARD: So, it took five days to go to Japan.

DN: Was there anyone else on the ship besides you prisoners in the bottom? Talk revolt sometimes?

HOWARD: No. No.

DN: Did you think about escape since there was no one else?

HOWARD: Noooo. Escape where? Into the water? Yuk.

DN: About taking over the ship. That's a possibility.

HOWARD: Ooooh, I'm sure we talked about it, but there were quite a few military on there but no, we didn't have a chance.

DN: Now was it getting . . . you were heading to a different climate, and you just had tropical clothing, right?

HOWARD: Right. What we called dungarees. The chambray shirt and the denim trousers.

Because they zigzagged so much -- they were afraid of American ships and submarines -- it took us five days to get there. I remember when they opened the hatch down to the cargo hold. When they opened the hatch, how cooolllldd it was the 15th of January. God, it was cold! And to come from the tropics into that kind of weather was just almost unbearable. But anyway . . .

DN: Physically, how were you doing because you were basically on what? Soup? What did you get aboard ship? Rice and soup?

HOWARD: Aboard ship? Hmm. I think we got some rice. I don't remember.

You know one of the unfortunate things really as far as the oral history tape is concerned, is that so much of it I've forgotten.

DN: Forgotten, or blocked out?

HOWARD: Both. I don't know. I mean why remember?

Like the sun dial. I've got a sun dial here somewhere, and it says, "I record only the sunny hours." And so I just wanted to erase the tape, see. So I really don't remember what we got. I'm sure we got some rice. We got some soup.

One thing that I recall is that when they took us ashore we were at the southernmost island, the port of Todotsu or Takamatsu or something like that -- they took us to the camp of Zentsuji, which is a rather famous P.O.W. camp in Japan. And when we got there that night, they gave us some hot soup. Oooooooo, was that good! Ooow, was that good! I don't think it had anything in it (chuckles) but it was sure good.

DN: Can you describe for us the camp? Did it have heat, plumbing . . . ?

HOWARD: You know what military installations look like. They're very unattractive buildings, row on row. Well, there were two or three buildings. Heat, no; running water, no; electricity, yes with a 25-watt bulb in maybe a room that would hold 50 people. You slept on bays I think they called them.

DN: Shelves?

HOWARD: Yes, like shelves. Maybe the lower one was three or four feet off the floor and then there was one above that, another four or five feet higher.

DN: How many people per shelf? I assume more than one.

HOWARD: Well, you were side-by-side. Now, you weren't crowded. I mean they didn't stack you, but still you were side-by-side so you had maybe three feet per person.

DN: Blankets? Mattresses?

HOWARD: Mattresses; no. Blankets; yes. They issued us five, but they were the strangest blankets. They were cardboard, like cardboard, and by using them and making them into a sleeping bag, you could stay warm.

HOWARD: But those doggone blankets were the stiffest things I ever saw. Paper! They were made of paper!

Pillow? Mmmmm. If you had one, it was Japanese style. A little thing filled with rice /husks/ and I don't even remember if we had pillows, but that was it.

And then they issued us winter clothing -- Japanese army clothing. Of course, none of it fit.

DN: How did you feel about wearing Japanese clothing?

HOWARD: We'd have worn anything that kept us warm.

DN: It didn't hurt your pride to put it on?

HOWARD: (Sigh) At that time, you had no pride. I mean you were . . . you were stripped.

There are things that identify people, see? It's who you are, what you do, what you have. These are the identities. But there, we (voice drops to a whisper) had no identity. We had nothing. As one person /POW/ told me recently, "Having been reduced to the level of animals, you never recover." And I think that's what's affected many of us. But no, we were animals. That's all we were. We were animals.

DN: Fighting for survival?

HOWARD: Yeeah. Fighting for . . . not fighting, but determined to survive.

DN: What other furnishings were in your rooms? Or in the barracks?

HOWARD: There was a table -- like a picnic table. And there was a little hibachi, a little urn that would burn charcoal. We didn't get to use it very often. Cold. Cold as a barracks, you know. And practically no light.

To go to the toilet, you had to go to what they called benjos. You had to go outside. And, of course, if you went out at night, you'd get hassled. "Kura! Kura! Doko deska?" "Where are you going?" Hmmpf.

DN: What kind of utensils . . . were you issued
utensils to cook -- or to eat with?

HOWARD: I think we were. I think everyone had a little
bowl or a canteen or something like that. I think
so. Then, of course, many of us had managed to
bring a spoon or something like that.

DN: Did they begin harassing you right away then?

HOWARD: Oh, yes. Yes.

DN: Can you tell us some of . . .

HOWARD: Like the general . . . like the general said,
"It's the aim of Japan to give its POW's (sarcastic
laughs) as much pain as humanity will allow." It
wasn't so bad for the time I was at Zentsuji and
we were there 'til maybe June. And then there were
150 of us that were sent Well, let's see,
there was . . . navy and marines, we were sent to
Osaka. There we were barracked under the bleachers
of a baseball stadium, which wasn't all that bad,
but it wasn't all that great either.

 And there's where things started getting
different because they paraded us downtown and
people would spit on us and . . .

DN: Had you had any contact yet with the Red Cross,
or packages, or letters, or nothing at all?

HOWARD: We had practically no contact with an-y·bod-y,
an-y·time because the Japanese just didn't permit
it.

DN: While you were still at Zentsuji, wasn't that
when General Doolittle bombed near Tokyo?

HOWARD: Um hmm. Yes. When was that? It was in the
spring. March? Or April?

DN: How . . . what did you feel . . . did that
build up your morale at the time or did it just
make the Japanese harass you more?

HOWARD: (Sighs) Oh, it did a lot for our morale, yes.
Japanese seemed to make light of it and play it down
as much as they could. But up at Osaka in the

HOWARD: summertime, we were unloading ships and . . .

DN: You were still staying at the stadium, right?

HOWARD: Yes.

Unloading ships -- 220-lb. rice bags, rice sacks . . .

DN: Now was there a skill to doing the rice sacks? Did they teach you -- a certain way of . . .

HOWARD: Aah . . . I think they taught us, or we taught ourselves and, of course, we were learning the Japanese language then, see. I mean, if we were going to make it, we were . . . the better, more fluent we were in Japanese, the better off we'd be. And there was some kind of . . . well like when they'd push a railroad car, for example. I mean they didn't have switch engines come around and move railroad cars; the coolies and prisoners did that. I remember the "Yo si, yo si, yo si," you know; that was the . . . you know, just to get a cadence going. There was something about such kinds of Japanese expression when you lifted the rice sack, one on each end. "Ok sai, doksai," or something, and then we'd get it moved.

We did pretty well until . . . there were some kind . . . we did some kind of sitdown strike. It had to do with ammunitions or war materials or something. We got kinda cocky and we weren't about to move those war materials. They threatened us. Then all of a sudden, they took away the regular guards who were consistent, fairly decent, and they brought in what we called the goon squad. These were people who were illiterate, tough, mean, ugly, broadshouldered, and had . . . oh, clubs like baseball bats. From then on, that's when things changed.

DN: Now, did you have some of your own people who were collaborators with the enemy?

HOWARD: No.

DN: You didn't have to worry about this up to this point?

HOWARD: No. No, no, no.

And shortly after the goon squad moved in at Osaka, then 80 of us who were -- I found out later -- picked by one of our chief petty officers, a senior man there at the camp, as the troublemakers. There were 80 of us that were sent down to a steel mill.

DN: What did you do, Ed Howard, to be a troublemaker?

HOWARD: (Whispering) I don't know. I honestly . . . I never thought of myself as a troublemaker, and I was surprised to learn that.

But anyway, I wasn't one chosen to stay at Osaka.

DN: Now were you using your Bible yet or being temporary chaplain so to speak?

HOWARD: There was a fellow who was much more versed in the scripture than I was. And every evening there was a group of 8, 10 or 12 people that would gather around one of these bays, you know, where we slept, and we'd read the scripture and talk about it. It wasn't too popular in the camp, I mean . . . but there were some of us that did. That I think must be where I got my start. Then, of course, I was . . . as I recall, the only person who was allowed to take the Bible from Guam to Japan. At least when I got down to the big camp then, 80 of us were sent down to a camp in the winter of 1942 . . .

DN: It was about October, right?

HOWARD: Somewhere in there, yes. We stayed there all winter -- just the 80 of us. And we had a tight-knit group. We'd help each other. We'd steal for each other, and take our beatings . . .

DN: What was that camp like?

HOWARD: Huh?

DN: What was that camp like? (Pause) Was it smaller than all the others you'd been in or . . .

HOWARD: Oh, yes, because there were only 80 of us.

But as far as the way we slept or the blankets or the food or anything, the guards We got to know them. We had them all named. There was "Four Eyes"; "The Bull" -- Ishida, the Bull -- he was our . . . he was a rough one and I understand he got 20 years by the courts at the end of the war; "the Cigar Store Indian"; and there was "Gold Tooth." We had them all named.

DN: What was a routine day like when you were at this camp?

HOWARD: (Sighs) You got up, I don't know, I guess at daylight or something like that.

DN: Did you have watches or anything to tell time? How did you keep track of time and dates?

HOWARD: Hmmp? I don't know. Well, we got Japanese newspapers and they had dates on them and, of course, we had our slogans like "Home to you in '42," see. Then all of a sudden it was '43: "We'll be free in '43." And then it's '44. "Mother's door in '44." (laughs) I mean, you know, it's gettin' a little difficult. And so, '45 was "Home alive in '45." We figured it because we knew from the Japanese newspapers and maps how the war was progressing. We knew when Guam was retaken, for example, and we figured if we were able to live through '45, we could make it. So it was "Home alive in '45."

DN: By this time you were getting fluent in Japanese?

HOWARD: Yeeah. Except we found out that people [who] got too fluent were the ones that got the worst beatings so . . .

DN: Oh, oh-oh!

HOWARD: Hmph, hmph, hmph.

Anyway after getting up, you had to bow to the Emperor. Hirohito, wasn't it? Hirohito? You had to bow. It was part of their religion. So we'd do the bowing, except instead of saying, "Ohayo, Hirohito," we'd say, "Good morning, Roosevelt." (both laugh)

HOWARD: Aaah. And then, we'd have our breakfast which was a bowl of soup without a heck of a lot in it -- no meat, few vegetables, it's mostly just hot water -- and maybe a teacup of rice. They'd give us a quarter of a loaf of bread to take with us to the . . . when we went to work. And, of course, the hardest thing to do was to keep from eating that bread then, see? We were hungry. God, we were hungry!

And so, if we could take it with us, why then at noon we'd have some hot water or something, and we'd eat the bread. When we'd come back, why, we'd have another teacup of rice and some soup and the like.

DN: Now, you were at the steel mills?

HOWARD: I think . . . Huh?

DN: Working at the steel mills?

HOWARD: Steel mills, yes. There were two different work gangs, I learned recently. Somebody . . . I met an old P.O.W. buddy who reminded me there was a gang that worked the coal and a gang that worked the steel. And I happened to be on the gang that worked the steel, the iron ore.

DN: How were you chosen to get on that one? You have no idea?

HOWARD: No. Some indication was it was those who were the healthiest. You know, they said, well, these would be the ones that can handle the iron ore. And I was healthy.

DN: How much weight had you lost by then, would you guess?

HOWARD: Oh, I weighed maybe 145 lbs. when the war started and I got down to about a hundred. But the people who were the big ones, you know, 200 in weight, 250-pounders, they went down to 80. Small people would lose hardly any and that's one thing that saved me -- I was bony. And so even though I lost 30 or 40 lbs., I wasn't . . . I could afford to lose it.

So then back to the day, we'd come in probably six o'clock in the evening, but then I think it had

HOWARD: to do with whether it was summer or winter. They'd march us back to camp. And it all depended on who was on duty. You know, there was like a sergeant of the guard. It all depended on who was on duty whether we just marched in and went to our barracks or whether we got lined up and got the hell beat out of us. Sometimes . . . Ishida, the Bull, was the worst, and if we got our clothes dirty, that was "dami, dami"; that was bad, bad. If you didn't get them dirty . . . oh, that's "dami, dami," you didn't work, see? You couldn't win! Anything you did, you couldn't win.

And . . . oh, the kind of things they'd pull on us! In the summertime you had to have the windows and doors of the barracks closed. "Fresh air bad for you, dami, dami." In the wintertime, when you'd want to keep the darn place fairly comfortable, you know, as comfortable as you could, "Window open. Window open. Need fresh air." And in the summertime when you wanted cool water, they had these wooden buckets. (Imitating Japanese speech) "OooooO, cold water is no good, got to be boiled." So they'd give you hot water. In the wintertime you'd want hot water, (again imitating Japanese speech) "Oh, no. Hot water is no good for you. You gotta have cold water." (laughs heartily)

DN: (laughs)

HOWARD: Aaaw, unbelievable!

DN: Did you have to count off in Japanese?

HOWARD: Um hmm. Yes. And there's where we'd always get in trouble. It's hard enough to count off anyway, you know. "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight . . ." but when you've got to do it in Japanese and your mind's not too good, you're hungry and you're tired and you're homesick, you're ill and "ichi, ni, san, shi, go, roku, shichi, hachi, kyu, ju . . ." and, invariably, somebody down the line would screw up.

DN: (laughs) Then what happened?

HOWARD: Maybe "ju hachi" or "ju shichi" got screwed up. "Mo ichido" [once more]. What was it? "Bongo"? "Mo ichido" -- one more time, see? "Bongo tinko" -- muster, you know. Again we'd go through it. Sometimes it'd take hours to get that darn counting done. And

HOWARD: other times, they'd maybe come in at 11 o'clock at night and get us up. Make us count off. And sometimes we could sneak it in for somebody who was sick. We'd get somebody to fill in for him, you know. There was a voice.

DN: (laughs)

HOWARD: "Niju, niju hachi." (shouts) "Niju hachi" . . .

DN: (laughs) What did you do for recreation?

HOWARD: Hm.

DN: You got paid, right? For the working?

HOWARD: No.

DN: You didn't . . .

HOWARD: No.

DN: You didn't get any money whatsoever, no Japanese money?

HOWARD: At the first we did, but not after that.

DN: What about poker playing and . . . ?

HOWARD: No. (very low voice) What'd we do for recreation? Talked about food.

DN: You didn't try to get your mind off of food then?

HOWARD: No. We sure didn't talk about women.

DN: O.K. That leads to another question.

HOWARD: (laughs heartily)

DN: (joins in laughter) What did you do about sex since you were a group of men there? Was homosexuality a problem?

HOWARD: No. Sex did not exist. When you're hungry, when you're being treated like animals, and you're being worked to death, sex doesn't enter in. No one had the strength for it or had the interest in it. The only thing we ever talked about was homemade

HOWARD: bread, beans, you know, soup beans, and as far as I know, there was never a sexual act of any kind during the four years. It just . . .

DN: In your area. In your area.

HOWARD: It just didn't occur. It takes strength.
(laughs)

DN: (laughs) No strength? (more laughs)

Did you have a buddy system with someone that you'd pal around with or did you yourself . . . did the men pair up or find those they disliked or how did you . . . you know, in a fraternity house . . .

HOWARD: Um hm. There were some that I would try to march with and work with, and I'd usually try to pick the optimists. We had some that were pessimists and (voice dropping to a whisper) I couldn't stand a pessimist. A pessimist would say, "You're never gonna get outta this alive." "The war's going to go on for six more years." You know what I mean. I had the feeling maybe they were right, (voice again drops to a whisper) but I didn't want to hear it. Didn't want to hear it. So I tried to work with the optimists. Of course, you couldn't always pick your people that you marched with or . . . I don't think I had any really close friends -- oh, two or three maybe, not really close friends.

You were talking about when did the religious bit start. Well, (sighs) there's a saying there are no atheists in foxholes, but not everyone became religious over in the P.O.W. camp. It was probably no different than Terre Haute, Indiana. For some of us it was an opportunity to walk with God and talk with God, and that's the thing that I think was good about it for me. (half whispering) How close can a human being get to God?

DN: You didn't resent Him putting you in that position?

HOWARD: No.

DN: No?

HOWARD: No.. Uh uh. No, it was . . . I think I just saw it as a victim of circumstance, but I memorized Bible verses and repeated them. I would walk -- you know, as we marched back and forth to the steel mill -- or as I worked, I would say these verses. I think I committed a little over 250 to memory, saying them over and over, like "Romans 10:13 . . . ," and zip right on through it.

DN: So you kept your mind busy?

HOWARD: Yes. One way I looked at it was that the prison camp existence wasn't bad if we hadn't known anything better. We didn't have sugar. If I had never tasted sugar, I wouldn't miss sugar. If I had never known freedom, I would be content with my lot.

But I really tried and I never could get God to talk to me.

DN: He doesn't have to speak out loud.

HOWARD: No, but I tried. I tried to see if I could hear a voice. You should be able to. You should be able to hear the voice of God, but I never did. The only time I (half laugh) ever did was before I got to the P.O.W. camp.

One Saturday afternoon -- beautiful afternoon -- I was on shore leave and I was walking down the street in San Pedro, California. And a voice said -- it was in the area of pawn shops, honkytonks, bars and the like -- and the voice said, "Young man, what are you doing here?" I turned around and there wasn't a soul around.

DN: It might have been your conscience.

HOWARD: No. (very low voice) It was the voice of God. It was the voice of God saying, (whispering) "Young man, what are you doing here?"

DN: And what did you as a young man do? Did you get out? Or did you ignore that voice of God?

HOWARD: No. No, no, no. That wasn't it. I wasn't doing anything bad. I wasn't doing anything bad there, but I had There was a group called

HOWARD: the Fisherman's Club. I don't know if you know the Fisherman's Club or not. It isn't where you go out and fish. It's "Follow me and I will make you a fisher of men." I met with that group a number of times there. I always had this kind of natural leaning toward the spiritual, toward the religious, and then . . . let's see. I was at Guam three years before the war started, and I became, oh, somewhat of an alcoholic because you could buy native whisky for something like . . . the good stuff was 50 cents a bottle. And I was . . .

DN: Too readily available.

HOWARD: Yeah, I was really living it up. And I realized that that wasn't the way for me. So Marquita and I, we started reading the Bible together, made sure that we went to church, you know, and it was about three, four, five, six months before the war started that I gave up alcohol. (voice drops to a whisper) We'd read the Bible and have family prayer. I was ready! I was ready. Hmmp. (sighs)

A camp of 400 starving men, conditions about as bad as they could be, and to be the one with the Bible. (sigh) How helpless I felt!

The Japanese recognized that I had a role, and the first time someone died they sent someone in to the steel mill to get the "parson." Only time I ever got to ride a bike in Japan, and we rode . . . I rode the bicycle back to the camp to arrange for the funeral ceremony. And when . . . matter of fact, I've got a picture or two of it . . . that evening then when the people came back from work, why, they all lined up out there and the Japanese had done the best they could with their flowers and the ceremony. It was a full-blown affair.

But here I've got to deliver a funeral sermon . . . What do you say? (laughs nervously) "You're the lucky one, buddy!" (laughs)

And then the next time, it was a little played down. After that, no more . . . I didn't get to knock off work, no more bicycle ridings, no more muster. I mean it became routine except they would always send me to the . . . it was like a cemetery. I don't know if bodies were buried there or not. It

HOWARD: was a very small place. But there was a crematorium, a closed fireplace, and they always sent me over then as a witness. I can remember one time looking in there and seeing that body burn.

DN: I don't think I'd like to see that.

HOWARD: But you need to see things like that. Why do you need to see them? I don't know, but anyway, I remember looking in there and seeing that body burn.

DN: Were they dying now of malnutrition or of a disease?

HOWARD: Yeah. Anything. A boil or a carbunkle . . . I don't think we had that many die -- 15 or 20 maybe. When I got back to the States then, I wrote all the parents, the wives. Then it became such a weight on me, you know, that caring that I could have done better, I could have done more, I could have preached better sermons. So one time I burned everything -- diaries, letters, mementoes -- just one big bonfire.

DN: Do you regret it now?

HOWARD: Sometimes. I say, gee, I'd be able to recall things. I remember writing the parents of one fellow that died up in Michigan. You know, it was such a nice letter I got back and . . . I only kept a few miscellaneous things.

DN: Now, were you getting any mail yet after all this time?

HOWARD: I got one letter from my wife.

DN: One.

HOWARD: Yeah. That I saved. I gave it to my daughter.

I got five or six letters maybe from my mother. I got one package from her I remember. Two suits of long underwear, vitamin pills You know what I did? I traded the vitamin pills for chewing tobacco.

DN: Aaauw. (laughs)

HOWARD: (laughs) Because I didn't care about the vitamins. But the chewing tobacco, I could take a little piece of it, see -- Beechnut chewing tobacco. It came in a package. I could take a little piece of it and it was sweet. You know when you have no sugar, that Beechnut chewing tobacco is so sweet. I could just sit there, and it would just last and last. So I traded vitamin pills for it. (laughs heartily)

DN: They issued cigarettes to you, too, didn't they?

HOWARD: Yes. That was our medium of exchange. Somebody'd go around saying, "I'll give five cigarettes for a quarter teacup of rice." Or somebody would have a quarter teacup of rice, and he'd go around and say, "I'll give this quarter teacup of rice for a half of a teacup next Tuesday." That was hard. That was, I think, the most difficult thing that I had to do, and that's not get myself in debt. So easy to borrow; so hard to pay back.

DN: (simultaneously) . . . to pay back.

HOWARD: Yeah.

DN: Now did you have anybody giving medical attention in the camp?

HOWARD: We had a doctor, one of the most beautiful creatures I think God ever put on earth. He came from the Philippines. We didn't have anyone /from Guam/ with us. But in 1943 -- the fall of '43 -- when they moved us to a big camp and they added 400 army men from the Philippines -- they were survivors of the Bataan death march -- there was a doctor, Doctor Side, and he did the best he could, but they didn't give us any medicine or anything.

DN: Now, this is Hirohita No. 2? Camp No. 2?

HOWARD: Yes. O.K. First there was Zentsuji. We were there until about May. Then there was Osaka, or Osaka as the Japanese would say. Then in the fall of '42 to the small camp at Hirohata where we worked in the steel mill and on the docks. Then they built a new . . . big camp, Hirohata No. 2, and moved us there. We still worked in the steel mill.

DN: How far away was it from the small camp?

HOWARD: Not very far.

DN: Not very far.

HOWARD: A couple miles.

DN: What was it like compared to the other ones?
Still the same?

HOWARD: We had a . . . we had discipline among the
80 of us -- 80 from Guam. Oh, did we have discipline!
Nobody would steal from anybody.

When they added the 400 people, a lot of them
National Guard, and, of course, they had . . .
anybody who'd gone through that Bataan death
march -- that 100 kilometers . . . and survived,
and then the hell ship to Japan, they were in bad
shape. But when they put us with the 400 from
Bataan and Corregidor, discipline was gone, so we
had to re-establish it. People would steal from
each other, and we set up our own kangaroo court.
I remember seeing some people stripped and beaten
with a big marine belt. We did that ourselves,
you know. Twenty lashes and they'd cry, but we had
to. Had to.

DN: Um hm.

HOWARD: Humpf.

DN: Now, did you get baths very often when you were
over there?

HOWARD: It wasn't very often. They built big concrete
tubs that would hold 20 to 25 people, just out of
regular concrete. There was a way they had of
heating the water. They built a fire under this
concrete. Well, the bad thing about it was since
you were so run down, you'd go over there, get in
that hot water, and -- of course, we were infected
by lice and everything else -- we'd get in that hot
water and sit there. Ooooh, it was so good. In the
wintertime it was the one chance you had to get warm.
You'd get out and fall flat on your face. Pass out.

DN: Because of the heat?

HOWARD: Well, the shock I guess. You'd just become so weak. You'd get up, brrrr. O.K. Carry them back to the barracks. (laughs) And . . .

DN: Did you take turns being the first in and . . .

HOWARD: Yes, by squads. I think there were 80 people in a squad, and there must have been six . . . six squads, I guess. O.K., squad 1 is first this time, squad 2 . . . and they'd trade once a week or once a month or what. And if you were the last, the water was pretty dirty, but it didn't matter. It didn't . . . it didn't make any difference.

A lot of the food we ate was dirty. I remember eating orange peels that I'm sure had been . . . well, I know they'd been walked on, probably crapped on, you know, dust them off and eat them.

DN: Did you eat worms and such?

HOWARD: I remember eating castor beans. I found out you can't eat castor beans. Oh, was I sick! Whew! We boiled weeds. Humpf. Funny thing, you know. (sigh) The Japanese used cows to pull their little wagons. They would always bring the cow's noontime ration in a wooden bucket. Well, I discovered that in . . . mixed with all that straw in there was some bran. So one day I had a chance (voice drops to a whisper) to sift that bran out of there and I ate the bran, see, and that cow . . . that cow watched me all afternoon, looking at me with those big eyes. I felt so (laughs) sad.

DN: (laughs) You'd stolen from the cow?

HOWARD: (laughs) You know it took a long time before I could steal.

DN: I was just about to ask when you had to steal for the first time.

HOWARD: Well, of course, the average P.O.W. was stealing from the time we were taken prisoner because it was survival. It was continuing the battle. But I decided that I was going to live according to the scriptures. Thou shalt not steal. I think about a year or two had gone by. I had never stolen. I was getting in pretty bad shape. And then I got to

HOWARD: thinking about "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth the corn," and "The laborer is worthy of his hire." And I said, "That's it. Fair enough." They weren't giving me enough to stay alive, so I became one of the 80 thieves. The only time I got caught, they didn't know it. They didn't know I was carrying loot. We devised all sorts of ways to carry food. One of the most common was like a jock strap. It had a pocket in it so you could tie it around here and here you had this . . . like a sock and you'd wrap it around you. Salt was prized, and we were working a coal ship that had carried salt. In back of the coal, up against the bulkheads, was salt. Oh, boy! We loaded up. That happened to be the evening that for some reason we got beat. And they made it very rough, you know, with clubs. Man they beat me and they beat me and that salt got in the wounds. (shrill whistle)

DN: No bath!

HOWARD: (laughs)

DN: (laughs) Is that the first beating that you'd gotten?

HOWARD: No.

DN: No.

HOWARD: No. I really don't remember them all. Some of them got beatings a lot worse than I did, but all of us got it at one time or another.

DN: Um hm.

HOWARD: But I remember . . . I didn't get the water torture -- a number of people did.

DN: Do you want to describe the water torture?

HOWARD: (clears his throat noisily) Well, one was just holding a bucket of water over your head which you couldn't do very long. When you started to relax, you'd get clobbered.

Another was when you were laid on your back and water constantly dripped into your nose or your mouth, you know, drip . . .

HOWARD: The worst was submerging a P.O.W. in water until he passed out. That was the worst.

I think they killed one of our people. I'm not sure if they killed him or not, but I can remember the water torture they gave him and the beating and hearing his screams. That was one of the really bad ones. I don't remember what the problem was but the . . . (sighs) the most common torture -- I'm talking about physical torture now, not psychological -- the most common torture was standing at attention. When we'd come in from work -- and I think we always marched in four abreast -- and we'd come in and depending on who was the sergeant of the guard was what happened. If Ishida, the Bull was on, why, we were always in for it. Inspection, you know. And "Count off" and "March." Everything was in Japanese commands. And so, we practiced marching. We'd be out there, tired, worn out, feeble, ill, what have you. "March," "Practice," "About face," and then some of them -- and it was just whim -- he'd let them go on in. Then here's some of the rest of us out there still marching, back and forth and back, and attention and bowing and all that.

But the standing at attention without moving was one of their means of torture and if you moved, you got beaten. (whispering) Really got beaten -- hitting with the clubs, slapping, but, of course, the slapping was part of the Japanese army.

DN: Now was this across the face that they'd slap you or on your body?

HOWARD: Yes. Yes. On the face. They'd just go whop, whop, whop, whop, whop, whop, and of course, it was hard for Americans to take.

DN: They were smaller than you.

HOWARD: The Japanese were smaller and you were big and macho, and . . .

DN: Did anyone ever try to swing back?

HOWARD: Not at a time like that, but I know some that defied them or the civilians that we worked for,

HOWARD: maybe take up a shovel and say, you know . . . really get after the guy. He'd run away and nothing would happen.

I remember I sassed the Japanese foreman I was working for one time and he just beat the hell out of me. (laughs) So it didn't always work.

DN: Um hm.

HOWARD: The best thing to do was just learn your Japanese and stay out of trouble.

DN: You mentioned psychological torture?

HOWARD: (sigh) Well, it wasn't the brainwashing but it was being made to feel inferior. To make you feel like (whispering) animals. Make you be animals. Like the hot water or the cold water, that sort of thing. Ooh, and make us feel hopeless.

DN: Did you let them see that their harassment was bothering you, or did you all try to hide it so they couldn't get any satisfaction?

HOWARD: I don't know. I don't know. I don't know.

DN: Could you tell as the war was going on and they began to lose, any difference in your treatment?

HOWARD: Rougher. The longer it went on, the rougher it got. And when . . . let's see, it was the night of the third of July of 1945 -- the last year of the war -- wave after wave of planes came from our aircraft carriers. They bombed a town that was close to us -- town of Himeji -- where there were some aircraft factories. They started coming over at midnight, so it really was a Fourth of July celebration for us. And although we were . . . if we went out of the barracks, we'd have got shot. But we would peek through the cracks and slip doors open and watch. The sky was ablaze for four hours (whispering) and it went on and on and on.

The next morning then -- and we knew there'd be some retaliation -- the next morning they said, "Well, the American planes bombed your storehouse where your food is kept, and so you're going to go on reduced rations." And of course, we were on

HOWARD: subsistence, just enough to keep you alive then, and we had five days of that. We didn't think we'd make it. (whispering) We didn't think we'd make it. Beautiful sight but then And they'd get . . . they got meaner as it went on. We knew that if the Allied Forces had to land on the mainland, that none of us would live. We knew that. They would move us, and any move, we were just incapable of. We just couldn't do it.

DN: Was there any way that your camp was marked so that your troops would know . . .

HOWARD: Right at the end.

DN: . . . that you were . . . at the end? But not during . . .

HOWARD: No. No.

DN: So you could easily have been bombed?

HOWARD: Yes. Yes. In fact, a number of camps in Osaka were fire bombed. They were bombed and fires, of course, . . . they were made of wood. We escaped that though because of where our camp happened to be.

HOWARD: I think the most frightening thing to me that I saw, toward the end of the war, elderly women and little kids sharpening . . . practicing bayonet thrusts with sharpened bamboo sticks there in the factory where we were working.

DN: The men basically were gone and these were really their manpower . . .

HOWARD: Yeah. The men were gone and the only thing they had to draw on were the elderly women, mainly, and kids. And, of course, the banzai and the yoksi and some of these cries that the Japanese military uses, you know, with a bayonet thrust, it just curdles your blood. But to see little kids and old women with those sharpened bamboo sticks practicing bayonet thrusts It would have been June, July, or about, so if the Allies had landed, not only would we have not survived, but every person there would have fought to the death.

DN: Were any of the Japanese civilians helpful or try to give you medicine or food? Could they see in where you were? Did they know how you were treated?

HOWARD: Whew. Not much. There was a large wooden fence around the building and when they . . . well, of course, we were the object of ridicule when they marched us through the streets of Osaka. You remember I was telling you about that.

DN: Did they throw stones?

HOWARD: Spitting on us. No. Not so much, but it was just to show how superior Japan was. Here are all these big fellows and they'd surrendered. The Japanese don't believe in surrendering.

When they started the beatings after we got to Hirohata, they would close the gates so the civilians wouldn't be aware of what was going on. Some of the people tried to be kind to us, the Koreans who were a sub-class in Japan. They weren't . . . they were treated different than the Japanese, and some of the Koreans tried to help us. But then, what could they . . . how could they help? They didn't have anything themselves. Medicine was non-existent. But at least a kind word, you know, that sort of thing.

DN: Now, when the men came in from Bataan and Corrigedor, your 80 were split up, right? Because you were a bad influence so to speak on . . .

HOWARD: Yes. At first, they kept us as one squad of 80. Then they realized that since we had learned how to survive, we were passing the word on to the others. We were, by that time, accomplished thieves and we knew our way around. We knew Japanese well and we had contacts and . . .

DN: O.K. Contacts, what kind of contacts?

HOWARD: (sigh) Contacts in the sense of work details, see? Work assignments. Contacts who would bring us Japanese newspapers.

DN: Now, were these other soldiers in the Japanese army or civilians or . . . ?

HOWARD: They were civilians.

DN: Civilians.

HOWARD: Yeah. They were civilians because all the guards did was take us out to the steel mill and turn us over to civilians. So the 80 of us had things pretty well under control. I mean, we had it where we could survive and we stuck together and . . .

DN: What did you give in return to these people?

HOWARD: Humpf.

DN: You had to barter something.

HOWARD: No. It wasn't that kind of arrangement. No. They were just like . . . All right, a newspaper, see, it was an old newspaper and so they'd give it to us, and it had maps in there and the kind of printing that they used on maps we could read. And we could read a little of the newspaper itself. So, if it showed they were fighting in Guam, see, then we knew what was happening.

And then it would say that the Japanese had decided to withdraw from Guam. Well, we knew Guam had been re-taken.

No. It wasn't trade. We didn't have anything to trade, but . . .

DN: You still weren't getting paid?

HOWARD: No. No.

DN: No money crossed hands? But at the end of the war some money was turned in by other camps evidently?

HOWARD: Yes. At first they . . . in that camp at Zentsuji, they gave us some Japanese yen and you could buy a few miserable little things, but after that they knocked it off.

DN: Well, wouldn't these people get into trouble for giving you a newspaper then? Weren't they taking a chance by helping?

HOWARD: Yes. Yes. Yes, they were. Except the guards, as long as the people at the steel mill were happy, see, then the guards were happy. You know, everything was going well. So the bosses at the steel mill, they could do about what they wanted.

DN: Now, what did you do in the steel mill?

HOWARD: The . . . when they first took the 80 of us from Osaka down to Hirohata, they took us out on an inspection tour of the steel mill. Some of us then were assigned to a division because . . . I think it was coal and I think it was the steel. I think there were two industries there.

Then the next day, they took us out and put us to work. I happened to be working the ore ships. We had little scoops, little shovels, little dinky things. Oh, boy, this is going to be a snap. But that ore is just like steel. We didn't think we were going to live because by the time that day was over, we were just so exhausted. We didn't think we could get back in camp.

The people who were working the coal ships were worse off than us in a sense because they were so black, so dirty. At least we were clean!

DN: Um hm.

HOWARD: (whispering) But tired, oh God, so tired. We didn't think we were going to make it.

Probably our most . . . at that time we were probably at our lowest ebb because we saw what we were going to have to do there.

DN: O.K. This is about October of '42.

HOWARD: 'Forty-two, yes.

And we moved pig iron, it was in slabs about 18 inches long and 10 inches wide and 3 or 4 inches thick, so we'd have to move that around. We used what they called the yoyo poles. You put it over your shoulder and a basket on each end, and unloaded barges and just all sorts of things. Chipped castings. I don't think we ever fired the furnaces. They had some furnaces there, but I don't think we ever fired them. We did other menial things.

DN: Did you ever have strikes again after your other sitdown strike that you had?

HOWARD: Nope. That one . . .

DN: That taught you . . .

HOWARD: That one, when they brought the goon squad in, yeah, maybe . . . Geneva Convention and all that had no meaning whatsoever to the Japanese.

DN: Did anyone try to escape there?

HOWARD: No.

DN: Didn't even bother . . . ?

HOWARD: There was no place to go. You stood out. You were so different, and if you could . . . and we could have easily gotten out of camp, but where would you go if you got out of camp? Was it worth the try?

DN: Now. When you were at these camps the rest of the time you were in the war, it was on the ore ships or at the dock basically?

HOWARD: Yes. Yes, I stayed at the steel mill there at Hirohata for the duration of the war.

DN: Now is this the time that most of the men were getting dysentery and teeth falling out, and beriberi, dengue fever, and so forth?

HOWARD: (sigh) Yes. The ones who came from the Philippines were the ones who really fell apart because they had had it rough. Being prisoner of the Japanese is bad enough, but to have suffered what they suffered down there and all -- the torture of the Death March, and the way they hauled them to Japan on what they called the hell ships, the dysentery, the malaria, and everything. So they were in bad shape.

For us, it was beriberi, dengue fever which is a tropical disease . . .

DN: Can you describe how a person feels when they have these?

HOWARD: Dengue fever is a fever that lasts, oh, a week or two, and as the day goes along, your temperature rises. And by evening you're out of your head. You're raving. I don't know what the temperature gets to -- 105° or so, something like that.

DN: Did you have that?

HOWARD: Uh huh. Yes. I had that before I was P.O.W. and then it recurred, of course, and I think I still . . . maybe that's why when I feel down sometimes, I think it's a recurrence.

And, of course, we all suffered from beriberi and guilt, and we want to get into that feeling of guilt in a little bit.

I remember the most awful day of my life was when I had some kind of fever. Usually they wouldn't let you stay in; I mean, you went out to work unless you were missing a leg or something. But this one day, they really let me stay in because my fever was so high and I was out of my head. I would come and go, and come and go, and I didn't want to live. That was the one day I didn't want to live. Otherwise, the will to survive (emphatic whisper) was dominant. But that's one day I didn't want to live, and . . .

DN: How did you pull out of that?

HOWARD: (sighs) I just survived; I just survived the day and the days and people would help you, you know.

DN: Fellow prisoners coming in.

HOWARD: Yes. Yes, they would help you as best they could. There wasn't much they could do. They'd help you.

DN: Did any try to commit suicide?

HOWARD: One fellow, a Marine, said he'd had it, and he was going to commit suicide. So how do you think we solved it? How do you think we did it?

DN: Tell him to go ahead. (laughs)

HOWARD: Right. We got a rope and gave it to him and said, "Here. We'll help you. We're going to make

HOWARD: the noose now and then we'll put it up over the rafter; we'll pull it up." He backed out. (laughs)

DN: (laughs) He backed out. It's harder to do . . .

HOWARD: (laughs heartily) But other than that, no.

The will to survive is unbelievably strong in people like us anyway.

DN: Why? Why do you think . . . religion or just the animal survival feeling?

HOWARD: Just the animal survival. No, it wasn't religion although we were all religious . . . not all, but I mean we drew upon the spiritual power that we could. But we had had good lives and we had wives and children and girl friends. And we know once we got out we could have cars and travel and so we had so much to look forward to.

DN: So you kept this in the front of your memory? The good times? And looked forward to the future.

HOWARD: Yes. Yes.

DN: Did you reminisce a lot about the past? Or did you try . . . what . . . was there anything you tried to cut out, that you didn't . . . that hurt to remember?

HOWARD: Hmpf. Well, food was the topic of conversation. People wrote recipes. We traded recipes. We talked about how good it would be to get back and get some of mother's deep dish apple pie. And we might talk about that for days. The merits of different types of apple pie. (laughs)

DN: (laughs) Not a cook among you either probably.

HOWARD: No. No. And that we were going to be so easily satisfied when we got out. All we wanted was hot bread, soup beans, that sort of thing. What we discovered that we didn't know, we didn't expect, nobody warned us, nobody told us, see, we didn't have any counselling when we came back.

DN: None at all?

HOWARD: No. None at all. We wanted to get . . . get out and get home. Also, the military and the medical profession was not . . . did not have the capability of counselling P.O.W.'s. They didn't know what to do for us, what to tell us. So the one thing we didn't expect was that as soon as we got that loaf of bread and those soup beans and got our bellies full, then we had to start looking for other things. We had to keep reaching and looking for new highs, new excitements, new adventures . . .

DN: You were still wanting adventure.

HOWARD: Well, not adventure in that sense, but you had to have new highs, see, because here for almost four years we had been looking forward to (whispering) contentment. Perfect happiness! And as soon as you got your belly full, then what? You were still looking for that perfect happiness, see? And so we reacted in different ways.

I had, I think, 18 different cars the first two years.

DN: Oh, my!

HOWARD: I had to have the radio on all the time. Movement. I had to move. I had to keep active. Nothing satisfied me. A lot of people committed suicide after they got out. A lot of people became incurable alcoholics. Others changed their personality entirely; just something snapped. The fellow who was my religious mentor in the camp at Osaka -- he stayed there then instead of coming with us when we went to Hirohata -- but he became exactly the opposite after he got out. Foul-mouthed, bars, running around . . .

DN: Did he blame God maybe then for having put him into that?

HOWARD: I don't know, I don't know. But that was the kind of thing that happened, see; the personalities changed. And you couldn't be happy; you couldn't be content, and that big, ol' beautiful cloud up there in the sky, it had a hole in it and you kept falling through.

DN: Let's get into the guilt you mentioned a little bit earlier, the guilt. Guilt about what? Having survived? Or guilt about not committing suicide?

HOWARD: I think it would be those things. I admired the Japanese for not surrendering. The hara-kiri, cutting the stomach.

DN: Um hm.

HOWARD: I admired them, and here we, though on orders, surrendered. There was something dishonorable about it. And if I ever have it to go through again, I'll fight to the death. I will never surrender again. One, I don't want to go through it again and two, I think that's the only honorable way for a fighting man. So . . .

DN: Don't you think though that that is a little bit of brainwashing that was done to you? In a sense you could undermine them by staying alive, by showing them that you couldn't be put down, that you could take anything.

HOWARD: Yeah, but . . .

DN: That you were really superior to them because you could withstand all the insults.

HOWARD: It wasn't worth it. It wasn't worth it. And we didn't feel that way. We weren't showing them anything. Oh, sometimes, you know, we would but then on the whole it was just to survive, having surrendered, just to survive. To get out and be happy. To get out and be happy. Except the feeling of guilt.

DN: What about your families though? If you'd all committed suicide?

HOWARD: Families didn't enter in. A lot of the families would have been better off because P.O.W.'s are difficult to live with. Very difficult. It's getting easier for me now. Feeling of guilt -- I don't know. I remember a few years ago I was honored when they dedicated the Memorial Hall up here, you know, where the war veterans' counsel is, G.A.R. Hall. I was their World War II veteran.

HOWARD: And seated next to me was the Vietnam veteran Danny Hatcher. He only had one arm, no legs. And look at me, see. Here I am. I look healthy and so, I think there's some of that, too.

DN: Well, though . . . but you may not have limbs missing, but what about the mental anguish?

HOWARD: Yeah, but that doesn't show.

DN: But you still have it. Right?

HOWARD: Oh, sure. Definitely you have it. You have it.

There's an uneasiness. In an interview for television I said that we live with an uneasiness. It's a strange feeling, kind of a dread. I don't have nightmares anymore. I used to. Sometimes I'll have a dream about it but it isn't a bad dream.

DN: What kind of nightmares? The beating? Or seeing other people dead, or . . . ?

HOWARD: You are being chased, you know. Oh, it wasn't real but you'd wake up in a sweat or you'd scream. I've heard other P.O.W.'s talk about it. Just recently one woman was saying that her husband will have a nightmare and be crying and she'll wake him and he comes up fighting. (nervous laugh)

DN: Well, he's living it in his dream. (laughs)
You can't blame him.

HOWARD: Yes, he comes up fighting.

It's a strange thing; it shouldn't be there. And this is one thing that P.O.W.'s are trying to organize for now. Because by and large, we need some counselling. We could be in better shape than we are, and the country really hasn't done anything for us.

Now, for the crippled amputee, they are trying to do for him. He gets \$1,000 - \$1200 a month and things like that, but for people like me, they aren't doing anything and it's our feeling that they should. They should give us a little help. Maybe to ease our conscience (laughs), I don't know.

DN: Well, this is . . . I don't see that you really have anything to feel guilty about; you were able to survive . . .

HOWARD: Yeah.

DN: . . . difficult circumstances.

HOWARD: (sigh) I guess you feel guilty because . . . I survived and I have my limbs and others didn't.
(voice drops to a whisper) Maybe that's why.

DN: But everyone thinks that . . .

HOWARD: (raising his voice) I copped out. I copped out. I surrendered.

DN: You were ordered to surrender and being a good military person you had to follow orders.

HOWARD: I know. I know, but you still have that feeling. You still have that feeling; you can't escape it.

DN: O.K.

HOWARD: Some psychologist maybe (laughs) can explain it.

DN: (laughs) O.K.

Let's go back. Were you still . . . when the others joined you and they had disease, did they pass it to you? How did you . . . how did you handle that as a group? You were divided up and put in with them.

HOWARD: Yes.

DN: Were you able to bring them under control?

HOWARD: They split us up.

DN: At that time, is that when you really started feeling guilty when you saw those worse off than you?

HOWARD: No. No.

DN: No?

HOWARD: No, no, no. This's something that happened after we got out. It's a carry-over.

(sigh and a pause) The disease that they brought with them was not contagious as far as we're aware of -- their malaria, their dysentery. Now, dysentery was a little bit. Lice . . . everybody had them, because in the wintertime you wore what you had and you wore it until the weather got warm (ha, ha).

DN: Did you get more clothing? How did . . .

HOWARD: They would issue what they called their winter uniform and, of course, they never fit right and they weren't all that warm; but one of the things that my mother sent me was some long underwear and so I wore that. But, of course, every night you had to pick the lice out of it.

DN: Did you have a change of clothes? Or did you keep wearing . . . you didn't wash it or anything?

HOWARD: We'd go to the river. They'd march us down to the river in warm weather and we'd wash our clothing, dry it, and put it back on. No. We just had what we had on our backs.

DN: As the war went on in '44, then they took you off rice, right? Because food was becoming scarce?

HOWARD: No.

DN: No? What about the egg plant and sweet potato vines and so forth that I've read that you were given to eat? Maybe not in your case?

HOWARD: They would . . . soup and what they'd put in it, we never really knew, but . . .

DN: Was it your own cooks though that cooked it?

HOWARD: Yes. I say, well, I never knew what was in it, but there wasn't much in it. But it would be the vines and it would be radish tops and some sweet potatoes maybe, just a little conglomeration. But other than being hot and tasting good, there was no beef stock; there was no meat in it; no body really to it. Rice, other than the rations getting a little smaller, why, no change there.

DN: And you had tea, always?

HOWARD: (sigh) Did we have tea? Yes, but it was weak, very weak tea. Sugar, no sugar. Almost never any meat. If it was, it was horse meat or rotten fish or something. It's amazing how you can live on rice.

DN: O.K. Was it regular rice? Or polished or unpolished?

HOWARD: It was polished rice.

DN: White rice?

HOWARD: Yes, white rice. And they gave us something that was like bran. We called it "tiki tik" or "tiki tak," or something. Apparently it was the rice hulls, and we feel that that's one thing that helped us to survive. That we got something out of that that lessened the beriberi.

DN: Vitamin C?

HOWARD: Yes. Some kind of vitamins.

DN: What about being honey dippers? Did you do that?

HOWARD: No. They had people that that was their profession. They would come in with their horse-drawn cart or their cow-drawn cart and these great big wooden kegs. They would scoop out of the toilet all of the excrement and what they call night soil, you know. They would use that for fertilizer, and that was one thing, of course, that caused your problems was that if we ate raw vegetables which we would do, why you'd get sicker than the devil. But you'd eat them.

DN: Were your rations cut down during the summer -- from the winter?

HOWARD: I don't know. I don't remember. I don't think so. I think they had it figured, you know, to the survival . . . the minimum that a person could survive on and still do a little work. I think that's what we got the year around.

DN: Did you ever steal from garbage cans -- Japanese -- were you able to do that?

HOWARD: Yes, if there was rice . . . on some of the ships -- and I don't know why they would do it -- some of the ships would take their left-over rice and they would put it up on top of the cook shack and let it ferment. Why, I don't know, but oh, yes, we'd gobble that up. We'd eat anything . . . grass. We'd take things -- weeds -- and boil them, eat them. Anything. It's the name of the game. Hmpf.

DN: O.K. On March 19 in 1945, that's when the area started being bombed -- Hiroshima. Could you see the planes? Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima, August 6, and Nagasaki, August 9

HOWARD: No. We were too far from it. But we heard about it. And there was a tenseness that we could feel in the Japanese people, and they . . . the people themselves didn't know what had happened, and they called it the "bakodan otashi" -- "bakodan," a bomb; "otashi," large, large. "Bakodan otashi," that's what they said it was. It was a large bomb. And we walked carefully then. We tried to not get out of line because I'm sure that they would have taken out their frustration, anger on us, and so, we tried to keep it cool.

DN: When did . . .

HOWARD: I did go to Nagasaki, incidentally, during the Korean war to see what it was like, and that's the one place that I was scared. The people looked at you with hatred.

DN: Oh, really?

HOWARD: Yes, and that was how long after . . . It was 1951, '52, and we're talking about 1945. I wasn't uncomfortable anyplace else but there Nagasaki, I wasn't comfortable. It was frightening to see the devastation. It's an awful thing, that bomb. I talked to a woman who was a nurse in the hospital, and she said that she had stepped outside of the hospital to where the wall was between her and the bomb, and even she had . . . she was scarred and I asked her what was her thought at the time. She said, "Just pure fright. Scared."

DN: Some American prisoners were killed in that.

HOWARD: Yes. And some of them that were around
Hiroshima and Nagasaki had a pretty rough way to
go as a result of that if they weren't killed.

DN: When did your release come about? Or did they
disappear, did you have any idea what was going on,
that that was that close?

HOWARD: We had two classes of people; the optimists
who were saying, "We'll be home alive in '45."
The pessimists, they would say, "We'll never get
out of it alive." The afternoon of August 15, they
brought us in from work early instead of working us
'til five or six o'clock, somewhere around the
middle of the afternoon. No warning or anything,
lined us up and we go in.

 The optimists are saying, "The war's over."
The pessimists are saying, "They're getting ready
to move us." You know, that sort of thing. I
decided in my own mind, and I think most of the
people agreed, that the next day would tell the
story. That if we didn't go out to work the next
day, then the war was over.

 So, sure enough, the next morning there is no
reveille; they didn't call us out. We'd go out and
look around and all the old guards are gone and
they had some new, young, polite guards. So then
we knew. You know, an armistice or something.

 About a week later, there was somebody from the
Swiss government, Red Cross, who visited the camp.
I think checking -- where are the P.O.W. camps and
how many prisoners and the like.

DN: Were you given any instructions by the radio
telling prisoners of war what to do?

HOWARD: No.

DN: Nothing. No flag up yet?

HOWARD: Not yet. I don't think . . . I don't . . .
I've forgotten so much that I really don't remember!
I do remember that at some time there was a flag
up. In fact, I have a picture of that. I did save
a few pictures; I don't even know how I got them.

DN: Yes. I was going to say, how did you get those pictures?

HOWARD: I don't know! I really don't know.

Some . . . we put "P W" up on top of the roof and then American planes came over and parachuted food and clothing and stuff to us. It was really the most dangerous time of the war because these pallets, with their parachutes, some of the parachutes didn't open. They'd go vrrrooom, you know. I don't remember if we had anyone wounded or killed or not, but we're out there running around, waving, and here are these beautiful parachutes. They're coming down with all the stuff, and the first thing we did was get sick.

DN: Too much food.

HOWARD: Yeah. We ate peaches and ham and then we'd go vomit.

DN: (laughs)

HOWARD: Go vomit.

DN: (laughs) And did you go back and eat again?

HOWARD: Then go back and eat again . . .

DN: (laughs)

HOWARD: . . . and sugar has a strange effect on a person. If you haven't had sugar, you eat some sugar and you can't sleep.

DN: Oh, really?

HOWARD: Yes. No sleep. It might have been two or three days (laughing) before we got any sleep.

DN: Did you wander outside your camp area or stay in?

HOWARD: We got brave and wandered outside of our camp area. I went up on the hill -- oh, about a mile away, I guess -- there was a Korean settlement up there. I was fairly fluent in Japanese at the time, and some way or other I got to talking to this

HOWARD: Korean family. They had a boy who at that time was 20, 22, and a girl about 15. They were real sweet kids. We sat outside and talked. I'd practice my Japanese and there was a big beautiful moon. When we got ready to leave the camp, I took everything I had -- the blankets and the like -- I took them up and gave them to that family.

Then, during the Korean war, in an effort to erase whatever was hurting me, I went back to the P.O.W. camp. I walked through it, went to the steel mill, and went out to visit the Korean family again.

DN: Were they still there?

HOWARD: Yes, they were still there.

END OF SIDE 1

TAPE 2-SIDE 2

HOWARD: The Korean family was still there except the girl who I thought was so pretty. She was my first female contact after the . . . all the years having no contact. I found out she had been killed by a train in the meantime, walked in front of a train for some reason. (sighs)

DN: When did you find out your wife was dead?

HOWARD: Hmpf. That was funny. Funny. Ha. I was flown . . . O.K.

DN: Maybe we need to back up.

HOWARD: I think it was about the 2nd of September. The 15th of August was the armistice and it was in the early part of September when somebody arranged a train. There was a railroad track near there. And so we all went down and got on the train and were taken to Tokyo. And there, of course, here's our armada. Here's all the battleships -- the Missouri and North Carolina and everything -- and so, they didn't know what to do with us. I mean, here we were coming in in trainloads and so they gave us a quick checkup. "Well, how do you feel?" "I feel

HOWARD: fine." You know, you wanted to get the hell out of there. They'd put us aboard battleships and just do anything with us. And (half laugh) I remember the battleship I was on -- I forget which one it was now -- since everyone the ship's crew is anxious to get back home and get out of the Navy, people were coming around and saying, "Is it true you people are going to stay in the service?" "Well, of course, we're going to stay in the service," because, you know, we were career people then. Oh, they just couldn't believe it. They just couldn't believe it, that we'd stay in the service.

Then I was put on a plane and sent to Guam since I had my family there. Put in the hospital. And the first Guamanian that I saw, I told him who I was and said, "Hey, I want to see my wife and my kids." He said, "Well, your wife's been killed."

DN: Just like that? No?

HOWARD: Um hm.

DN: When did she get killed in the war?

HOWARD: Guam was re-taken July 1944, the 25th-- I think was when the island was secured -- and she was killed July 21st or 22nd, something like that. U.S. attacked Guam July 21 and the island was secured two weeks later; Marquita was executed "the last week of July" according to official records.

And, according to the testimony that was given out there and I've got some records of it, she was one of those selected when they . . . when the high command moved its headquarters, you know, when Guam was under attack . . . moved its headquarters back up into the hill, and so she was selected as one of the house girls mistresses. And she told her parents that she wouldn't do anything to dishonor me, and so she was executed. That's the reason she was executed.

DN: Now, could that be part of the reason for your guilt? That she went ahead . . .

HOWARD: Yeah, I imagine so. Yeah. And I . . .

DN: . . . and that you didn't . . .

HOWARD: I think she made a mistake. See. I think she made a mistake.

DN: But you were just saying that you should have let yourself be killed. Now you're . . . that's contrary to what you just said.

HOWARD: Hmpf. It's a contradiction then?

DN: Right.

HOWARD: I don't know. Hm.

DN: Because you just said you should have done that, but now you said she shouldn't.

HOWARD: Hump.

DN: What about your children?

HOWARD: Children? Japanese by and large were good to children and, of course, the kids' grandparents and uncles and aunts, they took . . . you know, I mean the children were the most important thing to them, and so they were in pretty good shape when we got there. The boy was, oh, let's see -- he was born in 1940 -- so the boy was 5 and the girl was 4, and then I brought them back to the States.

I stayed there [on Guam] two or three weeks, I guess, trying to get my bearings and seeing some of the people. You talk about an exasperating trip [to the U.S.]. The kids didn't speak any English. I didn't speak any Chamorro. The kids knew a little Japanese. (laughs) And that was the way we conversed. (Ha, ha, ha) Oh, boy! And, of course, they got air sick . . .

DN: Were they afraid of you since they had not really seen you?

HOWARD: No. No. Uh, uh. The parents I think -- grandparents -- had prepared them for that. Uh, uh, they weren't afraid of me. Of course . . .

DN: You must have looked frightening though because hadn't you lost a lot of weight?

HOWARD: I put on a pound a day!

DN: When you . . .

HOWARD: Yeah, by the time I got back to the States I had my weight back. It wasn't a healthy weight, but I had my weight back and I knew my clothes would fit me.

But we landed at Kwajalein, and the kids found a kittycat. Well, no way can you bring a kittycat (laughing) and put him on a military plane and take the cat on to Honolulu. And one of the sailors on there -- or a crewman I think it was -- smuggled that cat aboard.

DN: Oh, that's nice.

HOWARD: (laughs loudly)

DN: (joins in laughter)

HOWARD: After the plane takes off, then here are the kids with their kittycat. I think the pilot could have shot somebody.

Then after they got to Honolulu, of course, the cat got quarantined.

DN: (laughs)

HOWARD: Yeh, that was funny. Chris says his earliest memory of that trip, or the one thing he remembers, is -- of course, he was having bad dreams, you know, everything was strange around them -- and he remembers waking up one night and somebody taking him outside of the hospital there in Honolulu, the naval hospital, and just walking around with him, looking at the stars.

DN: Um hm.

HOWARD: He doesn't know if it was me or not.

DN: Was it you?

HOWARD: I suspect it was because anytime that something happened with the kids, they got me up, see? And so I suspect it was. I don't know.

But he wasn't any more depressed in a strange land than I was. I didn't know how to deal with him. (laughs)

DN: (laughs) I would imagine it would be difficult -- two young ones.

HOWARD: Yeh. (laughing tapers off)

DN: What was your first conscious thought when you realized that you had survived?

HOWARD: Tremendous elation. You know, I mean when that . . . like when we get on the plane or when we get on the train, you know, to go to Tokyo and the like, oooh happiness, and yet also, again back to the -- not guilt in this case, but uneasiness . . .

DN: Well, you had been a prisoner so long and didn't know freedom.

HOWARD: Yeah. Yeah. Uneasiness.

DN: . . . and how to handle freedom.

HOWARD: Yeah. Uneasiness.

DN: Did you have difficulty mixing with other people? You had missed out on four years of culture of what was going on around you. Did you have any trouble mixing with women since you had not been around women for four years?

HOWARD: No more than I did with men. Humf. That's a question I hadn't thought about.

No. I wanted love. I wanted it so very badly. You know. That's something that I really needed. And luckily then, through a cousin, I met a very fine, loving Christian woman whose husband had left her. She had two children about the same age as I had, a boy and a girl, and so we were married. And she was killed in an auto accident. (nervous laugh)

DN: Another tragedy. How long had you been married . . .

HOWARD: Nineteen years.

DN: . . . to her?

HOWARD: Um hm.

DN: Now, did you go back to Guam? You were still in the service, right?

HOWARD: Yeah.

DN: When you married her, you were still . . .

HOWARD: I was still in the service.

DN: And did you go back to Guam.... ?

HOWARD: We went back to Guam. We went back and took the kids.

DN: Were you stationed there?

HOWARD: Yeah. I was there for 2, 2-1/2 years [1951-52].

DN: Afterwards.

HOWARD: So the kids got to see their grandparents, you know, and the people out there thought that -- my wife was named Jean -- they thought she was a jewel. Oh, they loved her because she was easy to get along with, very tolerant and had no prejudices, and was good to the kids, and so they really took her as their daughter.

DN: You didn't feel that the American government let you down by being so slow in rescuing you and . . .

HOWARD: Uh, uh.

DN: . . . no desire to get out of the Navy early? After that experience?

HOWARD: Uh, uh. Uh, uh.

DN: Complete patriotism?

HOWARD: Uumm. Yeah. Of course, at that time I had . . . see, I went in, enlisted here in Terre Haute in 1937 -- April 20, 1937 -- so in '45 I had eight years in. By the time I got out of the hospital -- because I was hospitalized at the Great Lakes [Naval Station] for a while -- I had eight years in.

DN: For what?

HOWARD: Huh?

DN: Hospitalized for what?

HOWARD: Oh, boy! Internal and external hemorrhoids, prolapsed rectum, what else?

DN: Kidney . . . ?

HOWARD: Later, kidneys.

DN: Most of this is due to the food, right?

HOWARD: Yes.

DN: What about your teeth?

HOWARD: Lost them.

DN: Before or after, or during?

HOWARD: After. (ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha) Ah, I was able to keep them until, let's see, after I got out of the service.

Oh, yeah, that's one thing I had; they called it gingivitis, I think, where the gums are inflamed. And the Navy tried to take care of it. Finally, an old doctor down at Dugger, Indiana, he said, "Chew tobacco." And I did. And they got well.

DN: Hmpf. That's a good reason (laughs) for chewing tobacco.

Are you bitter now or feel any resentment for the Japanese?

HOWARD: No. None whatsoever.

DN: One reason I asked this is on Lee Larrison's tape, he did not want to be a sister city any more with a Japanese city because he said he still could not forgive them after all these years, and he was not a prisoner of war; you were. And you say you feel no bitterness.

HOWARD: None whatsoever. The only thing that happens is if I am around Japanese -- Asiatic men -- I get bothered. I become very uneasy. The Japanese

HOWARD: women don't bother me, but there are Japanese men that bother me and so there are some in the library profession, you know. There are some Asiatic men and I have trouble with them; that's it.

I like a lot of the Japanese customs. I like their food. It's a picturesque country. It's changing rapidly now I understand.

I even drive a Japanese car. I often think about that. Now, why do I drive a Japanese car? At least at the time I bought it [1974], it was a quality product, and it was the size car I wanted. And you couldn't get the same thing American made. But also, the people who were my captors cannot own cars. Their standard of living was so low compared to mine. And so I think being able to buy one and drive it and be free, you know, it makes me feel good. It makes me feel good.

DN: What was the lowest thing that you had to do to survive?

HOWARD: (hesitates) What do you mean?

DN: Most degrading or that would bother you . . . you know, most that bothered you morally maybe? Something that you think that you'd never do that you had to do.

HOWARD: Oh, I think stealing. And it was about two years, as I think we've already mentioned, before I was able to convince myself that I was not violating a commandment of God: Thou shalt not steal. As I thought about it, you know, "The laborer is worthy of his hire," "You shall not muzzle the ox," et cetera, et cetera. That was hard to do.

DN: You feel that's the only way you had to compromise your principles?

HOWARD: Yeah. (in a very low voice) That was the only thing.

DN: Why do you feel that you survived and others didn't?

HOWARD: I don't know if it's . . . if it was just chance? Or was it a reward because I served my fellow man in church services and funerals and . . .

HOWARD: (deep sigh) So maybe there is some reward on earth. You know for doing good. And yet, one day, you know, I get back to Guam and find my wife's been executed. And get married again and then she dies in an automobile accident. It makes you wonder.

DN: Whether God's out to get you?

HOWARD: Or whether it's just all chance, see? But what I believe now with the very, very beautiful godly wife that I have, I think that God has said, well -- and I refer to it jokingly as a tribunal that sits in session up there -- says, well, now, Ed Howard down there, I think maybe he's suffered long enough. And so (laughs) we're gonna give him a reward.

DN: Well, you could also think of the possibility that one's hell is upon earth at times instead of afterwards so that you get it here and not later. That's a possibility.

HOWARD: So . . . but mentally, all right. (deep sigh) I would not have the mental facility, faculty that I have now, would not have been able to at age 41 go to IU /Indiana University/ and graduate with highest distinction and Phi Beta Kappa key and all that, if I had not kept my mind active during the war by memorizing and repeating every day those 250 Bible verses. And I read that Bible from beginning to end. I read it as literature and I read it as the word of God. And even though today I'm not always an active member of an organized religion, I feel very close to God, very close to God. And I have no fear of death. In fact, I'm ready to go now. Really, really, and this surprises people. But . . . and I've talked to the minister about it, and it's all right. And so, I'm ready. I know where I'm going.

DN: Don't you think this experience really has helped you get more community-involved?

HOWARD: I don't know. Probably in that I can relate to a people that perhaps others couldn't. And so, even though I've got the master's degree and all that jazz, I can be just as comfortable in denims. I can be just . . . in fact, probably more comfortable with a working man or woman that I am with . . .

DN: Upper echelon?

HOWARD: Yeah. Yeah. So now I think it helps me to relate, and I can perhaps empathize much better with the poor or the oppressed or the minority, having been a minority. Yeah. Having been a minority. And so I think . . . yeah, it helps me to relate to people.

DN: Do you feel that these memories will forever haunt you?

HOWARD: Yes. You know there's no escaping. There's no escaping. I'm more comfortable with them now. A year ago I couldn't have done what we're doing now [being interviewed], but my son, who went back to Guam [in 1979], he's leading the fight for reparations from the Japanese government for the Guamanian people who were such staunch supporters of the United States. He's forced me to get back into it. It's one reason that I'm glad to do this interview. I want to send him a copy of it.

Where were we?

DN: Whether you'll be haunted forever.

HOWARD: Oh. And I'm associating with P.O.W.'s for the first time.

DN: Why did you not sooner? You don't think that camaraderie would have helped you if you had done it sooner?

HOWARD: Um, um. I couldn't. I just couldn't stand it. It was too painful, and B.J. [wife] knows the torment that I've gone through to get this far, see, to get where I can look on it as something that occurred, just like a trip to Washington, D.C., or education, or an adventure, you know, but . . .

DN: We're talking about . . . what? 30, 37 years . . .

HOWARD: A long time ago [35 years ago].

DN: Uh huh.

HOWARD: A long time ago and it's just this year that I've been able to deal with it.

DN: Anything else . . .

HOWARD: You know, now, isn't that surprising?

DN: Yes.

HOWARD: Really.

DN: I'm surprised that P.O.W.'s didn't seek each other out to help each other.

HOWARD: There are . . . they're starting to now. They're starting to now. There's . . .

DN: Is this because of all the other prisoners of war that are coming back, and there's so much in the newspapers about it that may be bringing you out?

HOWARD: All right. That's partly it. Because of the plight of the hostages in Iran. I know what they're going through. And I know what they're going to face when they come back. And so maybe it's -- in my eyes -- a little more respectable or at least not as disrespectful as I've looked at it in the past.

DN: Why would it not be respectable? You served your country . . .

HOWARD: There's no . . .

DN: . . . And you served your country well.

HOWARD: There's no glory in being a prisoner of war.

DN: Do you think people do not like prisoners of war? Or don't respect them? Is that what you're saying?

HOWARD: No. I . . . No, not at all. I don't know if they . . . hmpf, perhaps . . . perhaps that's it. But . . .

DN: Don't you think many do not understand what you went through . . .

HOWARD: Yeah.

DN: . . . and therefore cannot sympathize?

HOWARD: That's it. But since I've got this special
[state license] plate on my car -- that P.O.W.
plate -- I'm proud of that. For the first time.
Having that special license with P.O.W., I feel
proud.

DN: But you . . . but P.O.W.'s are special people.

HOWARD: Yeah, but I never felt proud before.

DN: I wonder why.

HOWARD: I don't know. The reason we are talking . . .
the feeling of . . .

DN: Because of the guilt?

HOWARD: Yeah, and also, sailors, many of them, had a
tattoo that said, "Death before dishonor."

DN: You don't have . . . you have tattoos.
Maybe . . .

HOWARD: Yeah, but I don't have one that says, "Death
before dishonor."

DN: Well, if you've seen them, then they still
haven't died. They're walking around.

HOWARD: Yeah, except what we did I think was a bit
dishonorable. We should have resisted to death.

DN: You did resist . . . well, you were what --
400 men against 6,000 - 8,000 Japanese?

HOWARD: Seven thousand, yeah. So . . .

DN: There was no way . . .

HOWARD: I know there was no way, but we could have cut
them down. Maybe we could have each . . . if we'd
each gotten one, see, so that would have been . . .

DN: Well, you did fight. I think it was two hours
and 40 minutes . . .

HOWARD: Um hm.

DN: . . . and you had almost no guns -- the guns
[some of them] had written on them, "Do not fire.
For training only." So you didn't even know if the
gun was going to go off in your hand, right?

HOWARD: Right. But instead of my running right into
a Japanese bayonet, see . . .

DN: But how . . .

HOWARD: This guy was prepared. Where was my 45?
Locked in the holster -- that I was carrying, see?
I should have had that . . .

DN: How old were you at the time?

HOWARD: Twenty-one.

DN: You weren't that old that you would . . . and
you'd never had to fight in a war . . .

HOWARD: No, but you were supposed to be trained. The
military man is trained to kill. You're trained
to kill. That's your mission. And I should have
been ready. I should have had that . . .

DN: But God may have had other plans for you.

HOWARD: Hmm?

DN: God may have had other plans for you.

HOWARD: Mmmm. Maybe so, but then still, I think . . .
I think that's probably the basis of it as I talk
about it. Death before dishonor, and I don't see
being a P.O.W. anything of honor.

DN: I think it is. The fact that you were able to
survive for your country and to give that much of
your life for your country, how many men . . .

O.K., Ed, what was the prime goal you set for
yourself to survive?

HOWARD: (sigh) Well, I think you've already said it.
The goal was to survive. The goal was survival.
That was the name of the game, and so any minute,
any hour, any day that you survived, you had

HOWARD: accomplished something. And so all your faculties were focused on that. Get a little food, keep from being beaten any more than, you know, than possible, stay in reasonably good health and, of course, as I mentioned before in my own case, I wanted to keep my mind active. And I tried to come up with philosophies that if I had never known freedom, then that would be . . . wouldn't be too bad a life, see. If I had never known any other life, prison camp life wouldn't have been that bad. If I had never tasted sugar, I wouldn't miss it. You know, that sort of thing.

DN: Um hmm.

HOWARD: And trying to develop a philosophy that would enable me to be less unhappy, to suffer less than I would have otherwise.

DN: O.K. The other night you sang some jingles from when you were a prisoner of war. Do you remember any of those? Or how about repeating a few of them?

HOWARD: I don't really remember them and I've got to find someone who does because they should be recorded. They were developed by the Australians, by the limeys Englishmen, because in our first camp we were with some of the ones from the Gilbert Islands and places like that, and they were very talented. And during the first part of the war, when you had time and you had the energy to have skits and sing songs and that sort of thing. And one that I remember partly was: (singing) "There's a troop ship just leaving Japan, bound for the U.S. shore, heavily laden with time-expired men, bound for the land they ado-ore. And there's many a troop signing on . . ." and I, you know, I get a little mixed up here. I don't remember it. But the chorus, the refrain is -- in polite language --

DN: Oh, why polite language? (laughs) Let's have the real thing. (continues laughing)

HOWARD: Well, one way it was sung was: (sings) "Bless them all, bless them all, the long and the short and the tall. Bless the old sergeants and W.O. 1's, bless all the corporals and their bastard sons. And we'll say 'good-bye' to them all, as down the sea ladder we crawl, there'll be

HOWARD: no promotion, this side of the ocean, so cheer up, my lads," and then the other version, that's "Fuck 'em all." (laughs)

DN: (laughs) I didn't think P.O.W.'s would have that clean a language.

HOWARD: (still laughing) And one that I wish I knew, and it must have . . . I don't know, I think the song probably had no end because a couple of Englishmen had written this song in P.O.W. camp. And so it just went on and on and on and on and it was delightful. And the only part I remember: (sings) "She was sweet sixteen, the village queen, poor and innocent was Angeline."

DN: I'd like (laughing) to know the rest of that one.

HOWARD: I would, too, and I don't remember it!

DN: It had to be a goodie.

HOWARD: Yeah. And something about (sings) "As she lifted her skirt to avoid the dirt, she stepped in the puddle of the squire's last squirt." (laughs)

DN: And you said you didn't think about women when you were in camp?

HOWARD: That was at the very beginning, see. At the very beginning. But songs like that, you know, I mean and . . . oh, we used to cuss the guards, see, and our bosses if we knew that they didn't know English. Like I remember working in the coal ship and there was a guard . . .

DN: Coal ship, or ore?

HOWARD: Now, this was a coal ship. I . . . one day I was on a coal ship. And the guard was standing up on top of the hatch. And he'd holler down: (imitating Japanese speech) "Mo speedo. Mo speedo." And we'd holler back: "Your mother is a whore," and smile. (both laugh) "Go screw yourself." And he found out what we were saying.

DN: What happened?

HOWARD: He beat the hell out of us and from then on, was an enemy. He was a nice guy up 'til then. But he found out what we were saying.

DN: Did you have Japanese interpreters? Were they . . .

HOWARD: Yes.

DN: Were they born in America, or . . . ?

HOWARD: Some of them were. Like there's a fellow now, Dick Monninger, Terre Haute First National Bank, who's working on a master's degree in history here at ISU, and he's doing a term paper or thesis -- I'm not sure which -- on Tokyo Rose. And Tokyo Rose, you know, born in this country, happened to go over there just before the war started. And so you had a number of people like that who were educated in this country, or some way they learned English, and, of course, everybody really wanted to learn English. That was the language up until the time the war started. And as soon as Japan started out to conquer the world and establish the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, why then English, of course, was taboo. But, yeah, we had two interpreters in camp.

DN: Do you think they were a help to you or a hindrance since they could speak your language? Did they snoop?

HOWARD: No. No. We were lucky in the two that we had. One of them who was with us most of the time scared me one day. Once in a while I got to hold church services when we had a day off, which wasn't very often. And not being a speaker -- now I can speak, you know, without notes and the like -- but I couldn't then. And not only that, I didn't know what to say. What do you say standing up in front of a bunch of P.O.W.'s, you know? "Praise the Lord"? "Hallelujah"? And so I would write up my speeches, my sermons, and so he wanted a copy of it. And I said, "Oh, boy, here it is. They've got me nailed now." There it is in writing, and I don't remember what was in there but something that I was worried about.

In . . . during the Korean war when I was on an oil tanker over there -- you know, I told you I

HOWARD: went back to the old P.O.W. camp -- I looked him up. The reason he wanted that, he was a Christian . . .

DN: Oh, really?

HOWARD: . . . He was a Christian and he wanted it as something to keep, a souvenir. So I had a nice visit with him. Even though I (sigh) . . . it bothered me a little, but, you know . . .

DN: Because he's an oriental man here with you again.

HOWARD: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. And the honcho, the boss, that I worked for in the steel mill most of the time, I went back to visit him, too. And he was running a little clothing store, just an open stall, and he and I talked a bit and we got into it.

DN: Oh, really?

HOWARD: Yeah. Yeah.

DN: On what topic?

HOWARD: I don't remember, but we just . . .

DN: Couldn't . . .

HOWARD: No. We couldn't get along. Um, um. Um, um. We couldn't get along. I don't remember if we got in a fight or if I just left or what, but you know sparks were flying.

DN: Were you ever asked to sign confessions or broadcast, or any kind . . . did you get involved in any kind of propaganda?

HOWARD: No. They started out teaching us the Japanese language and then decided that was a waste of time. They did interrogate us, but they found out we didn't know anything. So that was dropped. They did, fairly early on, and we . . . to give the Japanese credit for some things, fairly early on, they let the prisoners of war broadcast, you know, a message. And it was picked up in San Francisco. I've got it somewhere in my records. And my mother was sent a copy of it. My mother and dad . . .

DN: Did she hear it?

HOWARD: No, she didn't hear it, but the fact that a voice claiming to be Edward N. Howard of Carlisle, Indiana, had this to say in the radio broadcast. And so they sent it to mother and that's the first time she knew I was alive, see?

DN: When did your parents and your wife find out that you were still alive? How long?

HOWARD: Oh, I think it was four, five months, something like that. Four or five, six months. In fact, there were two of us from Carlisle. The other fellow is -- he lives down by Washington, Indiana, now, but is in such bad shape, really terrible . . .

DN: Mentally or . . .

HOWARD: Mentally. Mentally and physically both. And then the one other fellow /Tony Iannarelli/ that I was with all during the war, that I recently visited in . . .

DN: This is your knit group of eighty?

HOWARD: Yeah. Yeah. . . . that I recently visited in New Jersey, is totally blind.

DN: How many of that original 80 -- well, you may not know the answer to this -- how many are still alive?

HOWARD: I do not know.

DN: You have no idea?

HOWARD: No. I have no idea. One of every three didn't live to get out of Japan, Burma or wherever they were. Those that did, a number of them or a large number of them, are dead or they're in poor health or they've committed suicide or become alcoholics or whatever and, for example, out of the, oh, twenty thousand or so, I guess that did get out of Japan There's a group that meets about every three months called the Kentuckiana Chapter of the /American/ Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor which includes Guam, Wake Island, and all the other places out there. And we had a meeting down at Evansville recently. There

HOWARD: were seventeen there. Seventeen. And so, where are the others? I don't know. There are supposed to be 1700 P.O.W.'s in Indiana according to what I read. But most of them, of course, are from Europe. And I've found about ten here in Terre Haute of which several are from the Far East. The rest are from Germany.

DN: Did you . . .

HOWARD: One of them wouldn't have anything to do with us.

DN: Why not?

HOWARD: For the reasons I've given you.

DN: Same, O.K.

Did you fare better in Japan than they did in other countries?

HOWARD: Oh, no. Worse. Far, far worse.

DN: Physical treatment? Or everything?

HOWARD: Everything, everything. In Germany, they abided by certain aspects of the Geneva convention and although they had some . . . like one of our legislators from Covington -- Lee Clingan -- is a survivor of the what they call the Polish death march, see. And so they had some rough times, too, but by and large, the people over in the Far East had it a thousand times tougher.

DN: O.K. I think we've covered everything, Ed, unless you can think of something else.

HOWARD: No. (heavy sigh)

DN: O.K. Thank you very much for this interview. It's been a pleasure.

HOWARD: Thank you.

END OF TAPE

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